CHICAGO LEDGER

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Inside—

a Mystery Story

That Moves With the Speed of the Wind

CHICAGO LEDGER

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Have You Bought Your Ticket Yet

For the Big Annual Show?

FOR the benefit of Ledger readers who have not kept in touch with things theatrical, the Editor here announces the annual spectacle, "Bunk and Bunkum of 1920," to be shown at the Tomfoolery Theater, Chicago, on the night of February 32nd. The same pains and expense will be gone to as in last year's great pageant, "Booze and Bamboozle of 1919," to make "Bunk and Bunkum of 1920" as great a success, financially and artistically. Those who are fortunate enough to secure seats will be treated to a combination opera, dramatic performance, sport carnival, pageant and circus. The railroads announce that they will give special rates to Chicago on this date from every point in the United States.

The following features will positively be presented in

BUNK AND BUNKUM OF 1920

ACT I.

(Pending seating of late comers.)

Two writers of standard dictionaries will fight a nineteen-round, twenty-four-carat-gore battle armed with skin-tight gloves for possession of the word **Schizatrichian.** The trophy will consist of a pair of Fireman and Police suspenders.

ACT II.

(The great medical act.)

Scene I.

A chorus of twenty-seven neurologists, blindfolded and dressed in clown suits, will dance a May dance around a statue of Freud, all chanting: "No Neurosis without a Psychosis."

Scene II.

Will show a magnificent tableau of 128 Middle West doctors, all stroking their beards and looking wise. The house will be darkened for five minutes while colored lights play upon the awe-inspiring scene.

Scene III.

Thirty-three alienists, each of whom has written a ponderous tome on "Egocentricism in Its Relation to Insanity," will do a combination black-face, knock-about, buck-and-wing, jigging, and banjo-juggling act upon a stage fitted up to represent a witness box.

ACT III.

(The scenic act.)

Scene I.

Will present a fantastical skit laid in the year 1959, showing the beginning of the Chicago Subway, with a chorus of workmen armed with nutpicks.

Scene II.

Will present an elevated pit track on the shores of Hell, on which two intrepid motorcycle riders, separated by 180 degrees of both temperature and arc, will attempt to run each other down. One will represent Anthony Numbstock, the other the New York publisher of "Zippy Stories."

ACT IV.

(The dramatic act.)

In this act the year's most powerful one-act play will be presented, entitled, "Innocent, M'Lord," a synthetic collaboration between John Irving Pearce, Jr., author of "The Metempsychosis," "The Midnight Bells of Eden," "M'Lady of the Shadows;" Winston Churchill, author of "The Mystery of the Chinaman's Bandana," "The Riddle of Clark Street," "The Puzzle of the 17 Purple Mice;" William Sanford, author of "How My Wife Eloped With the Barber," "Diana's Legs," "The Naiad of the Bathing Pool," and John W. Parkins, author of those stimulating farces, "How to Construct a Filing System," "Boosting Traveling Men Toward Better Sales," and "The Science of Cost Keeping in Big Commercial Plants."

ACT V.

(The mechanical spectacles.)

Scene I.

Will show twenty-nine Chicago lawyers with their chins all synchronized by a steel bar and lever attachment.

Scene II.

In this scene, Herman Schwenmauer's marvelous cycle-panorama will be unveiled to the public for the first time, showing State street at the hour of noon. It took Schwenmauer thirty years to complete this work. The 192,346 Loop stenographers shown on the huge spherical canvas were obtained by Schwenmauer with one mechanical model with an interchangeable set of short-tight skirts, various V-necks, and sets of hanks of frizzy wool.

ACT VI.

(The revelation act.)

Scene I.

Harg Ewell of Chicago's art colony will futuristically depict upon a blank canvas "Bohemia," by interlacing a marcel wave of spaghetti, a splotch of red wine, a verse of free verse, and a breadstick butt.

Scene II.

A giant cage will be wheeled upon the stage containing three American magazine editors who have quit mumbling about technique in accepting stories, and admit that the stuff sent in is either "bully," "fair," "mediocre," or "punk."

Scene III.

Professor P. Addlepate Beans of the department of Pharmacology, of the Perversity of Chicago, will demonstrate and reveal for the first time the secret of mixing a highball, as served by Chicago bartenders to thirsty Loop travelers seeking an oasis in the desert. Professor Beans will positively work with sleeves rolled up, using but three jugs of water; colored, carbonated and sweetened.

(The performance will conclude with a troop of performing green elephants, and a grand ensemble of doctors, neurologists, alienists, artists, ex-bartenders, authors, lawyers, editors, professors, dictionary writers and Chicago stenographers.)

Note—You must positively secure your seats early this year if you expect to see "Bunk and Bunkum of 1920."

The Editor

Old Superstitions.

FOLLOWING is a list of old superstitions which were part of our folklore before we had to have folklore societies to preserve this sort of thing:

A rooster crowing at the front door meant a visitor coming.

A twig catching a young lady's dress meant a beau.

An itching ear meant that some one was talking about you.

To turn back after starting meant bad luck.

Opening an umbrella in the house meant bad luck to the house.

A measuring worm on a woman's frock meant a new dress.

An itching left hand meant that you would marry soon.

Seeing the new moon over the left shoulder meant one would soon get money.

Probably most of us are superstitious about the number 13, just as people were a long time ago. Our own superstitions will amuse a subsequent generation, as those recalled by our readers amuse us. Only a subsequent generation can safely laugh at superstitions. Socrates was put to death for laughing at some of the superstitions of the Greeks. Let us, then, laugh at these and take the superstitions of our time as seriously as you please.

MEN—YOUR CLOTHES FREE!

Any man can dress himself from head to foot absolutely free and wear the latest Big City Styles in tailored clothes, shirts, hats, shoes, etc., by writing to Wright & Company, Dept. 4101, 500 South Throop St., Chicago. Just write your name on a postcard and say "Send me your Special Offer."—Advertisement.

Hot Off the Jokesmith's Anvil

Not Safe Any More.

Harry came home about 5 o'clock and his face and hands were very clean and his hair stood on end. His mother took one look and exclaimed: "Harry, I told you not to go swimmin' with Bob Ross."

"How do you know that I have been swimmin'?" asked Harry.

"Never mind who told me, but I know that you have been swimmin'," replied his mother.

After a while Harry said: "I'll just bet you anything that Mrs. Ross was over here this afternoon, and you and Mrs. Ross had that ouija board out."

Hanged by Red Tape.

The door of the superintendent's office at the county asylum burst open and the new attendant rushed in breathlessly.

"Sir," he reported, "Jones has just hanged himself."

"And did you cut him down?" demanded the superintendent in excitement.

"Oh, no, sir. He wasn't dead yet."

Irrepressible.

Judge—And for the levity you have shown during your trial I shall give you an additional fine of $10. How does that suit you?

Prisoner—That's what I would call extra fine.

Got His.

"Was that fellow who was engaged to two girls properly punished?"

"He was. One of them sued him for breach of promise and the other one married him."

Discovery of a Law.

"I understand you have discovered the law of gravitation," remarked the neighbor who happened to be passing the orchard.

"Yes," replied Sir Isaac Newton; "and a good job I consider it. There's one law that won't require a big appropriation and an army of deputies to enforce it."

They Seldom Work.

"The distinguished looking foreigner resents the imputation that he is a nobleman in disguise."

"He's wearing overalls, too."

"Yes, and he's working in a garage."

"Well, all I have to say is that if he is a nobleman his disguise is perfect."

Still the Best Man in the World.

"I met a woman today who has great faith in her husband's judgment," said Mr. Gabb.

"That's nice," commented Mrs. Gabb. "How long have they been married?"

"Two days," replied Mr. Gabb.

Evidently.

"The cave man used to drag his bride to the altar by the hair of her head."

"I see. A girl who wore false hair stood a good chance of dying an old maid."

Little Hope.

"For months I have been trying to get a girl with little success."

"What girl have you been trying to get?"

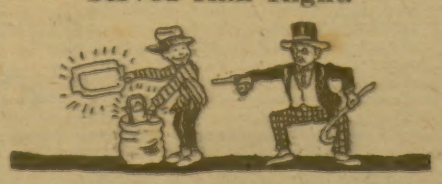
"Central."

Perfect Alibi.

"Who is the Ruth you admire so much?" demanded his wife.

"A ball player, my dear," he made haste to explain.

Served Him Right.



Jones (entering, surprises burglar, who is toying with his silver service)—Hey! What're you doing there?

Burglar (coolly)—As you see, sir, I am at your service.

Brain Teasers.

Riddle.

9—A pretty little thing am I,
My red coat spotted daintily;
I sometimes fly, I often crawl,
But never sting or hurt at all.

Three River Squares.

10—

1.
1. An American river.
2. A musical instrument.
3. A girl's name.
4. A gem.

2.
1. A French river.
2. A bird.
3. Cavity of the eye.
4. A disturbing sound.
5. To enroll.

3.
1. An English river.
2. Ill-looking.
3. A small plum-like fruit.
4. Scrutinized.

Mystical Names.

11—What boys' names are these: A traitor, a city in Texas, a river, a city in Kansas?

What girls' names are these: A province in Canada, an Easter flower, a famous general, a fruit, a month, a small cape?

Tattle Tales.

12—1. A lock of the animal family.
2. A lock from the head.
3. A lock made by steel and flint.
4. A lock from a horse's foot.
5. A lock that is matrimony.

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES.

5—Crossword Enigma.

McKinley.

6—Endless Chain.

1. Ad-am. 2. Amethy-st. 3. Steera-ge. 4. Geor-ge. 5. Gestu-re. 6. Rever-se. 8. Ermi-ne. 9. Neg-ro. 10. Ro-sd, Adam.

7—Charade.

Drag-on (dragon).

8—Double Acrostic.

VisitoR. AstA NiP. DeatH. YokohamA. ComE. KilL.
Van Dyck-Raphael.

It is not desired that readers send in the answers to the puzzles. They are printed simply as brain teasers, and the correct answers will be printed the following week.

May Happen.

"Women are becoming emancipated all over the world."

"Yes, I'm looking for a bunch of them to get together and draw up a declaration of independence."

Almost Out.

Caller—Is Mrs. Jones at home?

Cook-General—She is, but she ain't 'ardly in a fit state to see anybody. She's just bin givin' me notice.

Wait a Bit.

He—Could you take a joke seriously?

She—I scarcely know you yet.

NEW MOTHER GOOSE.

Young Mrs. Hubbard went to the cupboard
To get her white Pom a bone—
A grilled bone—
But she was too early, the cook being surly.
So she fed him a macaroon.

Liquidating.

B—How do you pay for a Turkish bath?

V—My day's wages.

D—They sure do soak you.

Why the Actor Quit.

Actress—Did they call you before the curtain?

Actor—Call me? They dared me.

GET "MORE EGGS" FREE

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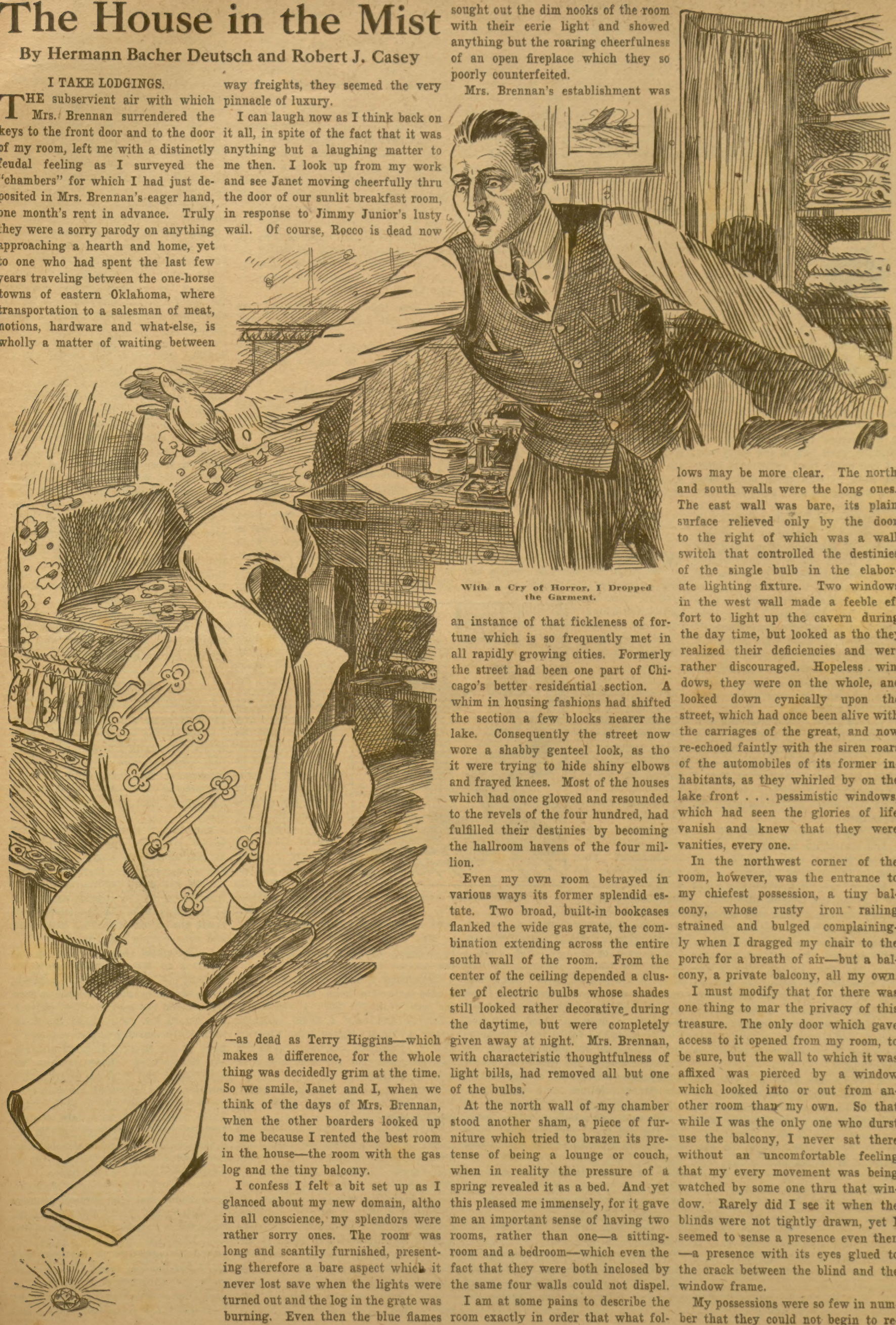
The House in the Mist

By Hermann Bacher Deutsch and Robert J. Casey

I TAKE LODGINGS.

THE subservient air with which Mrs. Brennan surrendered the keys to the front door and to the door of my room, left me with a distinctly feudal feeling as I surveyed the "chambers" for which I had just deposited in Mrs. Brennan's eager hand, one month's rent in advance. Truly they were a sorry parody on anything approaching a hearth and home, yet to one who had spent the last few years traveling between the one-horse towns of eastern Oklahoma, where transportation to a salesman of meat, notions, hardware and what-else, is wholly a matter of waiting between way freights, they seemed the very pinnacle of luxury.

I can laugh now as I think back on it all, in spite of the fact that it was anything but a laughing matter to me then. I look up from my work and see Janet moving cheerfully thru the door of our sunlit breakfast room, in response to Jimmy Junior's lusty wail. Of course, Rocco is dead now



With a Cry of Horror, I Dropped the Garment.

—as dead as Terry Higgins—which makes a difference, for the whole thing was decidedly grim at the time. So we smile, Janet and I, when we think of the days of Mrs. Brennan, when the other boarders looked up to me because I rented the best room in the house—the room with the gas log and the tiny balcony.

I confess I felt a bit set up as I glanced about my new domain, altho in all conscience, my splendors were rather sorry ones. The room was long and scantily furnished, presenting therefore a bare aspect which it never lost save when the lights were turned out and the log in the grate was burning. Even then the blue flames sought out the dim nooks of the room with their eerie light and showed anything but the roaring cheerfulness of an open fireplace which they so poorly counterfeited.

Mrs. Brennan's establishment was an instance of that fickleness of fortune which is so frequently met in all rapidly growing cities. Formerly the street had been one part of Chicago's better residential section. A whim in housing fashions had shifted the section a few blocks nearer the lake. Consequently the street now wore a shabby genteel look, as tho it were trying to hide shiny elbows and frayed knees. Most of the houses which had once glowed and resounded to the revels of the four hundred, had fulfilled their destinies by becoming the hallroom havens of the four million.

Even my own room betrayed in various ways its former splendid estate. Two broad, built-in bookcases flanked the wide gas grate, the combination extending across the entire south wall of the room. From the center of the ceiling depended a cluster of electric bulbs whose shades still looked rather decorative during the daytime, but were completely given away at night. Mrs. Brennan, with characteristic thoughtfulness of light bills, had removed all but one of the bulbs.

At the north wall of my chamber stood another sham, a piece of furniture which tried to brazen its pretense of being a lounge or couch, when in reality the pressure of a spring revealed it as a bed. And yet this pleased me immensely, for it gave me an important sense of having two rooms, rather than one—a sitting-room and a bedroom—which even the fact that they were both inclosed by the same four walls could not dispel.

I am at some pains to describe the room exactly in order that what follows may be more clear. The north and south walls were the long ones. The east wall was bare, its plain surface relieved only by the door to the right of which was a wall switch that controlled the destinies of the single bulb in the elaborate lighting fixture. Two windows in the west wall made a feeble effort to light up the cavern during the day time, but looked as tho they realized their deficiencies and were rather discouraged. Hopeless windows, they were on the whole, and looked down cynically upon the street, which had once been alive with the carriages of the great, and now re-echoed faintly with the siren roars of the automobiles of its former inhabitants, as they whirled by on the lake front . . . pessimistic windows, which had seen the glories of life vanish and knew that they were vanities, every one.

In the northwest corner of the room, however, was the entrance to my chiefest possession, a tiny balcony, whose rusty iron railing strained and bulged complainingly when I dragged my chair to the porch for a breath of air—but a balcony, a private balcony, all my own.

I must modify that for there was one thing to mar the privacy of this treasure. The only door which gave access to it opened from my room, to be sure, but the wall to which it was affixed was pierced by a window which looked into or out from another room than my own. So that while I was the only one who durst use the balcony, I never sat there without an uncomfortable feeling that my every movement was being watched by some one thru that window. Rarely did I see it when the blinds were not tightly drawn, yet I seemed to sense a presence even then—a presence with its eyes glued to the crack between the blind and the window frame.

My possessions were so few in number that they could not begin to re-

lieve the general barrenness of the room, for a traveling salesman's household goods are encompassed, as a rule, within the space of a suit case. It had been such a short time since the tales I had scribbled in an effort to while away the weary waits between trains had begun to sell, and I had acquired nothing new.

My shiny, new typewriter, on which the varnish was scarcely dry, stood upon a small stand near the window. My few books scarcely filled one of the bookcases. The other was merely another sham, for, behind the curtains which screened the interior from the profane gaze of the public, the shelves carried my shirts, collars, and other linen. There was no cupboard or closet in the room.

My few garments hung upon hooks in a corner which was also screened by a curtain.

I WAS contented, I suppose, and had fairly begun to settle down to a quiet and uneventful summer of work on a new series of stories. I knew and cared little about the other occupants who shared with me, at so much per week, the shelter of Mrs. Brennan's mercenary roof. I knew, of course, that the names were stuck on cards around the mail box in the entry-way, but I had never been sufficiently interested even to give these cards more than a passing glance. I ate at a little Spanish restaurant some three blocks removed, taking my modest table d'hote with wine each evening to the accompaniment of the roar of passing "L" trains—a sound which I found rather grateful, since it served to drown the audible eagerness with which some of Fernando's patrons consumed their meals. I feel sure that I must have met some of my fellow roomers when I came in from my daily walk along the lake front in the evening, yet I am certain that these casual meetings left me with do definite idea of who these sharers of Mrs. Brennan's so-called hospitalities might be.

My nerves always have been unusually steady. By nature I am anything but emotional, and rather inclined to be even phlegmatic. I am not particularly courageous, any more than I am extraordinarily fearful. In fact, I may as well admit that I am quite the average sort.

Janet, who has quieted Jimmy Junior, and has stolen up behind me, insists that this is not true; but Janet is prejudiced in my favor. Anyway, Janet has known me only since the night when I found the Everett diamond.

I don't suppose I shall ever forget a single detail of what occurred during that night, and certainly I shall never lose the memory of those first five minutes. I had given up my work in disgust. Somehow or other, the phrases would not come, and after discovering that I had described my heroine in the same chapter as blonde, brunette, and auburn-haired, I covered my typewriter and decided to await a more propitious inspiration.

I lighted the gas grate and switched off the electric light, preparatory to retiring. I had just bent to press the spring which was the open sesame to my more or less downy couch when there was a scurrying of footsteps along the hall, punctuated by the resounding bang with which an adjoining door was closed. The night was warm and the door to my little balcony was open. I could plainly hear, therefore, that the window which opened onto it was hastily raised and that some one scrambled out. A moment's silence was succeeded by a whisper which sent chills even thru my phlegmatic blood.

"Oh, my God," the whisper said. Nothing can describe the horror compressed into those three words.

For an instant I stood as one stupefied, and then leaped for the balcony. I doubt whether more than seven seconds could have elapsed between the time I heard the whisper and the time I reached the balcony. Yet, when I rushed thru the door there was no one in sight. The little window was closed and the shades tightly drawn.

I was, in fact, half persuaded that the whole affair was a trick of the imagination and the direct result of too liberal indulgence in Fernando's table d'hote. In any event I returned to the room and in the eerie blue light slowly prepared for bed. And, yet the horror of that whisper was far too real to be attributed to absent-mindedness, plus indigestion. I knew, even as I tried to argue with myself, that nothing had occurred. I knew that I had heard that whisper.

I opened the curtained bookcase, and drew out a suit of pajamas, and received my second shock. Vividly scarlet on the clean, white linen, and still wet, was a single drop of blood. Coming so shortly after by previous scare, the sight of it unnerved me. With a cry of horror, I dropped the garment and from it rolled into the light upon the floor the Everett diamond. In multi-colored rays of fire it gave back the blue flames of the gas log. It seemed palpitant, almost alive in the dancing radiance.

CHAPTER II.

AN INJURED WRIST.

WELL might that flashing ray of red be blood, for men and women had died because of the bauble which lay upon the floor. Its history was a long chronicle of rapine, betrayal, dishonor and murder.

I pulled myself together with somewhat of a mental and physical jerk. Obviously, unless I had become a lunatic in the twinkling of an eye, some natural cause lay back of the strange effects which had accumulated to confound me. I must think things out coolly. First, there had come from my balcony, a woman's horror-struck whisper; it had been a woman, I was sure of it now. Yet when I looked, the balcony had been unoccupied. A few seconds later I had found, upon a suit of pajamas otherwise clean and securely put away in an inclosed bookcase, a drop of blood still wet. Finally there had rolled from this same suit of pajamas out upon my floor, the Everett diamond, the details of whose disappearance had been emblazoned in newspaper headlines for a week past.

I approached the bookcase, which, as I have said, was a built-in affair, flanking the gas grate, and stretched forth my hand to see if there was a concealed opening, when there was a knock at my door. I hastily snatched the diamond from the floor and dropped the suit of pajamas behind my typewriter stand.

"Come in," I called.

It was Mrs. Brennan and she was obviously excited.

"I was wondering, Mr. Bradshaw," she said, "Whether you'd be good enough to run down to the drugstore for a roll of bandage. Mr. Higgins, sir, in the back room, is bleedin' somethin' dretful, he says, an' I haven't a stitch of old linen in the house for to tie it up with."

Instantly my mind flew back to the fresh drop of blood that had startled me less than five minutes before. I managed, however, to conceal my surprise.

"If that's all you need," I assured Mrs. Brennan as composedly as I could, "I won't have to run to the drug store. I have some absorbent cotton and bandages in my trunk." In a tone I tried to make diffident I added: "Is Mr. Higgins badly hurt? Perhaps it would be well to send for a doctor."

"So I told Mr. Higgins, sir," she replied. "But he wouldn't hear of it at all, not he. If you'll pardon my saying so, he said he wouldn't have no—and he used a very bad word—body-snatcher near him."

By this time I had obtained the bandage roll and offered it to Mrs. Brennan.

"Tell Mr. Higgins I should be glad to be of assistance to him," I said as I handed it to her.

Within a moment she returned.

"Mr. Higgins says," she informed me, "as how he'd appreciate it if you'd help him tie up his hand. I can't do it myself, sir. The sight of blood just sickens me."

I followed Mrs. Brennan thru the hallway which led into the unexplored regions of her apartment. As nearly as I could judge, we passed thru what once had been a dining-room and a second hallway, until we came to what evidently had been a maid's room during the apartment's days of affluence, but now rented out, even as my parlor.

"You've Had an Accident!"

In the room a young fellow—about 20 I judged—sat on the edge of a cheap iron bed, his face set and white. He held his right wrist firmly in his left hand and I could see he was really suffering. His face was not prepossessing. It was weak and showed pronounced signs of dissipation. Even now the slightly receding chin was quivering despite its owners evident efforts to keep it firm. He seemed much distressed.

"Mrs. Brennan tells me you've had an accident, Mr. Higgins," I began. "Let me see how serious it is."

He nodded without speaking and extended his right hand, still clutching his wrist with his left. I was astonished to find only a slight abrasion about a small jagged cut, bleeding slowly. From the amount of pother I had imagined that the hurt would be something greater.

"I guess I can fix that up all right," I said, looking at the cut. "How'd you manage to get it?"

"Tore it on the corner of the bed there," he said between his teeth. "It doesn't look like much, but it—it hurts. It's stopped bleeding a good deal."

Together with the events of the preceding half hour, this set my suspicions on edge, for, while I am not a surgeon, I could see at a glance that this was not the sort of wound to bleed freely.

I said nothing of this, however, and accepted Mr. Higgins' statement apparently at face value.

"Let me get some peroxide," I suggested, "and wash that out for you."

"No—don't!" he cried hastily. "Just tie it up for me, will you. I'm so d—d awkward with my left hand, or I wouldn't have bothered you."

Yet, when I suggested that I get some water from the bathroom in order to wash the wound a little, he did not object. In fact, he accompanied me and was so solicitous about cleansing the cut that we spent some time in washing it to his entire satisfaction. Then we returned to his room where I bandaged the injured wrist as skillfully as I could, altho here again, the operation was considerably lengthened by Higgins' fussiness about having the bandage properly adjusted.

Fully half an hour must have passed since Mrs. Brennan called me, when I bade Higgins good-night and returned to my own room. Here the fourth surprise of the evening awaited me, for the contents of my bookcase-linen closet had been thoroly searched during my absence. Its shelves were bare and the collars, shirts, handkerchiefs and the like which had stocked them, lay strewn about the floor.

Strange as it may seem, I had forgotten all about the Everett diamond, which I had slipped into my pocket, and I failed to connect this latest event with it in any way. I am sure that I thought of it only as an ordinary boarding-house depredation and therefore checked my first impulse to raise an alarm, and determined to wait until morning before notifying Mrs. Brennan.

I replaced my linens with as much care as I could command, locked my door, as well as the door leading to the balcony, bolted the windows, released my couch bed and retired. My last act before I tumbled into bed was to turn off the gas log.

I awoke the next morning with a sense of suffocation. The room was stifling hot. I looked about and saw the gas log burning brilliantly.

CHAPTER III.

I AM SUSPICIOUS OF HIGGINS.

IT WAS some time before the significance of the situation became plain to me. Naturally I arose with a splitting headache, and with my faculties incoherent. More by instinct than thru any process of reasoning, I opened wide the balcony door and turned off the gas log.

Not until I had copiously splashed myself with icy water did my brain become sufficiently clear to grasp the definite remembrance that I had turned off the gas grate before retiring, and that, owing to the strange happenings of the night before, I had adopted the usual precaution of locking both doors and even bolting the windows.

I determined, however, not to say anything to Mrs. Brennan, when she brought me in my breakfast—a breakfast which even the most baffling mysteries could not keep me from addressing vigorously. I scanned the headlines of the morning papers eagerly for news of the Everett diamond and was not disappointed. More suspects had been jailed and held on divers police theories. The names of these unfortunates were picturesque in the extreme. There were Dago Mike Schulz, Frenchy LaBelle, DeWitt Jennings, one of the innumerable Raffles of journalistic fiction, and I tried to imagine how my name would look on that roster.

What a stir I might have made by announcing that the Everett diamond was safe in my pocket, and I patted the little bulge it made there. I was the least likely man in the city to be suspected of complicity in the theft, and yet, I was the only man in the city who knew for a certainty where the gem was. But stop! Was I the only man? I cursed myself for a fool, since I had

not thought last night to connect the search of my room and my belongings with the fact that, mysteriously enough, the Everett diamond had come into my possession but a short while before.

More than this, I had entertained an unknown guest unawares while I slept, I am of far too practical a turn of mind to connect the lighting of the gas log with anything but a strictly human agency. Why had I not raised the alarm last night?

The person who had searched my rooms could doubtless have told an interesting story with reference to the theft of the Everett jewels, including the diamond, which was known to the collectors and lapidaries of two hemispheres.

Where could my thoughts have been? The whole thing seemed so obvious now that I searched my mind for something which could have made me overlook—— Jove! That Higgins affair! I suddenly remembered Higgins' apparent endeavors to keep me from returning to my room once I had left it, and how his every action had delayed me until a good half hour had elapsed between the time I had first been called and my return to my own quarters.

And the blood! I had found a single drop of blood, still wet, upon a suit of pajamas which were, as I supposed, safely stowed away in a closet or rather a bookcase, which posed as a closet. Not five minutes afterward I had been called upon to help dress a wound on Higgins' wrist, which, tho not of a serious nature, was still bleeding.

I swore aloud at my folly, and resolved to be more on my guard in the future. As the first step toward solving the mystery, which seemed to be enmeshing me more deeply with every passing minute, I determined to have an interview with Mr. Higgins at once. Inquiry concerning the state of his wrist would make as good a pretext as any.

When Mrs. Brennan entered to clear away the breakfast dished, I casually asked her about Mr. Higgins. She set down her tray indignantly.

"I'd like to say what I think of that rascal," she declared emphatically. "Some time last night he left with his baggage, and him owin' me two weeks' rent."

CHAPTER IV.
JANET ROBERTS.

YOU must be patient with me, if you please. Remember that I am telling you this from the viewpoint, not of one to whom certain things are happening, but of one who looks back upon events as they happened. I am trying to present each detail in the order of its occurrence, but, knowing the whole story as I do, I find it difficult not to let later happenings color the earlier events. For instances, Janet.

It is almost impossible for me to realize now that the Janet I can see from my place at my desk—the Janet who is sitting beside Jimmy Junior's crib, busied with mending what seems to be an outrageously tattered sock of mine, and showing in her bearing an indefinable, trim, matronliness—it is, I say, impossible to feel that this Janet is the wisp of a girl, who clad in a mouse-colored gray suit, used to slip so unostentatiously in and out of the room whose tightly curtained window opened out onto my balcony at Mrs. Brennan's. In writing of the Janet who knew and was deathly afraid of the Man-With-the-Dog, I catch myself writing of the other Janet—the Janet she is today. But I shall try to keep them separate, these two Janets, and I think the memory of the Man-With-the-Dog will help me.

Somehow, I always think of his entry into the situation as the first time I met Janet, altho I feel sure that I must have seen her many times before, when we passed each other in the hallway. It must be because it is in connection with the "Man-With-the-Dog," that I have my first vivid recollection of what she looked like.

I had dined at Fernando's as usual, and had taken a walk toward the lake in the warm spring evening. I had wanted to go out to the end of the long pier and let the water, lip-lapping against the slippery piling and the huge block of rubble work, tell me about the things it had seen and done that day. But one of the park guards, stationed on the beach, told me that the pier had been closed for repairs, and that until the deck, or floor, or whatever it is called, had been replaced, no one was allowed to walk out.

I felt in no mood to walk along the crowded ways of the park where the people were seeking their enjoyment of the evening's coolness. So I turned into one of the shaded lanes which meander aimlessly thru the wooded reaches of the park, and gave myself over to the enjoyment of the fragrant evening and an excellent cigar.

I had strolled along idly for perhaps a quarter of a mile when I was startled out of my revery by hearing a woman's scream ahead of me somewhere.

I leaped forward about a bend which screened my vision and saw before me the vision of the slip of a girl in a mouse-colored dress, facing a short, thick-set man, whose features in the darkness of the path, were indistinguishable. At his feet lay the largest bulldog I have ever seen. The dog sprang up as I approached, spraddled its bowed fore-legs out from its broad chest, and menaced me with a savage growl. I stopped short.

"What's the trouble?" I snapped out to the man. Turning to the girl, I asked, "Has this fellow been annoying you?"

You see the role of squire-of-dames was a new one to me and I was rather at a loss as to how one addressed the damsel one proposed to protect or rescue. Furthermore my sentiments were rather equally divided between a desire to play the hero and the intense conviction that the dog would do his capable best to discourage me in it.

"Down, Ripper," the man commanded the dog harshly. Then he turned to the girl. "He won't hurt you, missy," he said. The dog retreated to its master's feet, and stood there, to all appearances not only ready, but eager to fly at my throat. "The lady was scared of the dog," the man continued to me.

The girl had been standing there tensely. At the words she seemed almost to show relief, I thought, tho of course, in the darkness I could not be sure. At any rate her rigid attitude relaxed.

"I'm sorry if I've caused trouble," she said in low tones. "I was frightened by the dog. He seemed so vicious."

"It's all right, lady," said the man. "Rip wouldn't hurt a baby."

"I'm not so sure of that," I said, for to be frank I didn't like the looks of things a little bit. I did not for a moment believe that the cry which brought me running to the spot was the cry of a woman frightened by the sight of a huge dog. However, if the girl chose for her own reasons to explain it that way, I supposed it was none of my business.

"Seems to me that creature ought to be muzzled," I said.

"I got him in leash, ain't I?" replied the man sullenly. "Wot business is it uh yourn' anyways?"

"None, perhaps, unless I choose to make it so," I answered cheerfully. "Perhaps you object to my doing that?"

"Aw who wants t'known, huh—Rip ain't harmin' you, is he?"

What I wanted principally was to get the fellow away from here. The fact that he continued to hang around and evinced no intention of leaving, confirmed my suspicions that the episode I had interrupted by my arrival was not caused by the mere presence of a dog. I stepped to the girl and raised my hat with what I conceived to be the proper air.

"I beg your pardon, I'm sure, if my offer annoys you," I said. "But perhaps if you will permit me to see you safely out of the woods here, we can leave our low-browed friend to argue to merits of his dog with the park police."

"Thank you sir," the low voice assured me, and I am not so certain that there wasn't the least bit of a tremor in it. "If it will not be putting you out too much, I shall be glad of your company to the street."

"Better not let a cop see you," I called back to the man as we turned away. "He might arrest you because you haven't got but one dog license between the two of you."

But the man was gone. Whether he had hurried around the bend or merely stepped into the bushes bordering the path, I could not tell.

I don't know what we talked about on our way out of the park, or where and how we made the momentous discovery that we both lived at Mrs. Brennan's. For when we left the shelter of the paths and stepped out upon the brilliantly illuminated boulevards I had my first clear glimpse of Janet Roberts' face. Great, wistful eyes, shadowed under curling lashes; soft curving cheeks, and lips with just a wee droop to their corners . . . but if I start in to describe Janet, I'm sure to describe her as I know her today—the mother of Jimmy Junior.

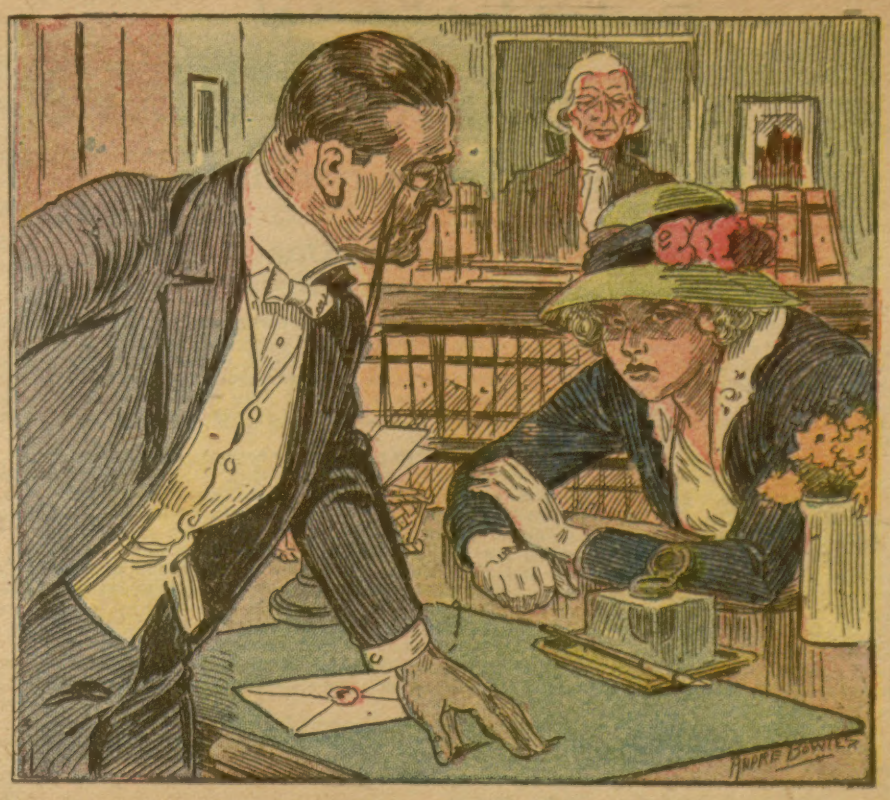
Somehow or other, we reached Mrs. Brennan's door. What I had said during the walk, I no more recollect now than I believe I knew at the time.

Yet there is one bright memory flash. As we entered the hallway Janet said goodnight to me and shook hands. For just the fraction of a shade longer than the ordinary handclasp, her soft little hand lay warmly in mine. Then she turned while I stood there gaping, like any other silly, sheep-headed idiot who has just met the eighth wonder of the world in the shape of a particular girl. As I stood there in the hallway, dimly lighted by the single, tiny blue point of gas flame which Mrs. Brennan's economy left us as a hall light, she turned into the room whose curtained-window looked out upon my tiny porch. I heard the key turn on the inside of the door. Then I remembered that this was the room from whose window some one had scrambled onto my balcony the night before—some one who had whispered in a woman's voice and in accents that had seemed frozen with pure, cold terror—"Oh, My God!"

CHAPTER V.
A VISIT IN THE NIGHT.

I PUT on my smoking jacket when I had entered my room and prepared for an evening of watchfulness. If there were going to be any more nightly visitors to my chambers, I wanted to be

(Continued on Page 9.)



Tell Me How You Did It.

A Case for Diplomacy

By Kenneth Harris.

THE not at all immature young lady with the large dark eyes smiled at the lawyer and said: "Yes, I see."

"I know," said the lawyer, with a dry grimace, intended for a courtly smile, "that if anybody could do it you can."

"You are a flatterer," said the lady with the golden hair.

"Not at all," protested the lawyer. "You see," he continued, "he is a young fool and his father is an old fool, that is all the difference. He has allowed me to engineer this case for him, and that is the solitary gleam of sense that he has shown thru the whole affair. He talked of turning him adrift, and all that sort of nonsense, but what would have been the result? The boy would have made a heroic speech of defiance, asserted his superiority to mere mercenary considerations and married the girl. The old man would have been made miserable for life, and so would he. He'd tire of her inside of six months."

"You don't seem to have a high opinion of the constancy of your sex," said the lady.

"Have you?" asked the lawyer, with a keen glance at her. "No, I haven't a high opinion of the constancy of the wind, for instance. I was going to say that my respected client would probably forgive the boy, but the boy would never forgive himself, and I am therefore going to put a stop to the business, but in a diplomatic way. If he is insensible to your charms I am mistaken—that is, when his father has withdrawn his opposition to his present infatuation."

"Suppose," said the golden-haired young lady, "suppose that after winning this young gentleman's—heart, I should conclude to keep it. I'm not at all sure that I will be able to. To tell you the truth, I hope that I will fail, altho that doesn't mean that I will not do my best. But suppose that he is that sort of a fickle fool and he becomes infatuated with me; what would happen if I kept him? Really, I might do worse. You say that his father is not altogether unrelenting, and even if he was, the son has some money of his own."

"I altogether refuse to entertain such a supposition," said the lawyer. "We won't discuss it."

"But if I did?" persisted the lady.

"You won't," said the lawyer, bending his brows upon her. "First, there is the little contract that you have just signed. Secondly, you and I are pretty well acquainted with one another. Thirdly, and finally, I will see to it that you don't. Here's the retaining fee," he continued, tearing a slip of paper from the book open upon his desk. The remainder is contingent upon your success. Now that's all, isn't it?"

"I guess that is all," said the lady with the golden hair. "Except," she added, "that I hope I won't get the remainder. Then I'm to be your niece on Monday night?"

"That's the program," said the lawyer. "Good night, niece."

"Good night, uncle," she replied, with a bewitching smile and a kiss wafted from the delicate tips of her gloved fingers. "You needn't be afraid that I am going to turn sentimental at my time of life."

"I'm not," growled the lawyer, as the office door closed behind her.

IN THE same chair that the young lady with the golden hair had occupied, regarding the lawyer with a nervous apprehension that he strove in vain to conceal with a look of bravado, sat a young man. He was an exceedingly good-looking young man—not more than 22 or 23, perhaps, broad-shouldered, well-built generally—a prepossessing sort of a young man, unless some student of the doubtful science of physiognomy should take exception to his mouth and chin, as denoting an infirmity of purpose at variance with his shoulders.

The lawyer was writing. In a moment or two he looked up with a benevolent smile. "I'm sorry to keep you waiting," he said. "I sent for you to talk matters over a little, or rather, to give you a little piece of news. Of course, I am naturally inclined to sympathize with your father in his opposition to your engagement to Miss——"

"I don't want to talk that over at all," said the young man, violently. "I've talked it over enough. My mind is made up, and if you talked a thousand years it wouldn't alter it in the least. A man marries to please himself, not his family. I'm not afraid to earn my living and my father can give every cent that he owns to——"

"Gently!" said the lawyer. "I agree with all that you say. You haven't got to fight me. I've been working for you all the time, and I'm glad to say that your father, after a long talk with me, has been persuaded to let you have your own way."

"You mean that he has consented?" almost shouted the young man.

"That's exactly what I had to tell you," said the lawyer. "Here, my arm is just flesh and blood, but I need it and don't want to have it shaken off."

"You're a trump," said the young man in a voice that quavered with emotion. "I don't know what I can ever do to show you how grateful I am. And I thought you were against us all the time," he added, innocently.

"Well," said the lawyer, with his most benevolent smile, "I believe you. You can dine with me tonight."

"I'll dine with you every night from this on if it will please you," said the lamb.

"I don't know whether it would," smiled the lawyer, grimly, "but in this case I am selfish. My niece—a charming widow, I hear—but, of course, they are all charming—has come to town and is staying at the Imperial. I have to dine with her tonight, but if there's anything in the world I hate it's a tete-a-tete with a relation. I want you to come with me as a measure of self-defense. You needn't hesitate. I'm told that she is quite unconventional, and I know that she is good-natured—I'll say that for her. Will you come?"

"Why, of course I will, if you are sure that you want me to—and you're

(Concluded on Page 15.)

The Last Installment of

Carrie Gunster's Slave

By Arthur Preston Hankins

Brief Review of Part One

The scenes of this romantic story are laid in the mountainous regions of southern California.

CONNIE KISSILMAN, president of a manufacturing company, young, unmarried and a millionaire, after a few days spent in the wilds of the hills, decided to return to the same district for two weeks of hunting, and at the same time buy, if he could, a small, beautiful lake and its surrounding acres for a hunting lodge. He had learned that the property was for sale thru an anonymous and illiterate letter directed to him and received at his office in Los Angeles.

TOVIT, an aged negro, met him at a designated spot about a mile from a lonely cabin near the lake and conducted him to his master,

WHITTLESAY GUNSTER, a tall, sturdy, white-haired old man of fierce demeanor, who bade the young sportsman enter the log shack, but without accepting his visitor's proffered hand of greeting. On his way to the eccentric old man's rustic abode a beautiful girl, in divided skirt riding costume, red riding booties with silver spurs, had joined the negro and his escorted guest. She entered the cabin with Connie and was introduced by the eccentric father as his daughter,

CARRIE GUNSTER, with no further information concerning her history, duties or habits. The father then confessed that he had lured the young man to his abode to demand a check for fifty thousand dollars, as compensation for devices manufactured and sold by the young man's father after Gunster's patents had expired.

Carrie saved Connie's life by suggesting that they make him their slave for two weeks and compel him to do hard and humiliating work under constant guard of the girl, who toted a wicked-looking six-gun and evidently knew how to use it. Connie proved game to the arrangement, but immediately began to hatch out some plan for his escape.

This story began in No. 2, the Ledger for January 8. Back copies may be obtained from our agents or newsdealers.

CHAPTER IV.

THAT night, by the dim light the candle allowed him, Connie Kissilman wrote a note with a pencil on the back of one of his bank checks, addressed to his private secretary in Los Angeles. He directed Gray to come in person with three trustworthy men to Thirty-one Pines. There they were to get a guide who could take them to Gunster's place. They were to keep out of sight and watch the place, and at night to steal down to a lone sugar pine growing at the edge of a millet field, the only tree of its kind on the homestead. In the ground, at the foot of this tree, they would find another note, which would tell them what he could not divulge with the chance of publication.

Next morning he contrived to slip the note into the middle of a bunch of turnips, tying the twisted grass-binding tight about the green tops. On the back of his message he had written:

> If the person who finds this note in a bunch of turnips will deliver it to Daniel Gray, care Kissilman Manufacturing Company, Los Angeles, California, he will receive suitable recompense for his trouble.

Surely some camper would find the note when he unwrapped his turnips and take the pains to deliver it, as requested. And before Gray could act, Connie hoped to be able to slash his way across the millet field and deposit at the foot of the sugar pine another, more detailed, note containing a full explanation of his predicament.

He had prepared his second note that night, writing on checks, numbering them from one to twelve. He explained everything to Gray, dwelling on his unharmed condition, and warning him to take no stringent measures. He told him where he was imprisoned and ordered that, if he had not put in an appearance by the end of his vacation period, Gray was to have the men bring files and hacksaws and rescue him stealthily by night. He intimated to Gray, his friend for years, that he was thoroly enjoying his adventure, and wanted no interference beyond that outlined. He would not be forced into paying a ransom for his liberty, he declared, but when he had gained his freedom, of his own accord, he meant to look into Gunster's claim and settle everything to the old man's satisfaction.

Connie worked hard with the cradle during the two days that followed the writing. His hands were blistered, but the millet was falling faster under his implement. By 10 o'clock of the third day he was nearing the sugar pine.

The girl was guarding him, sitting on her pony, reading a book. She had become less reticent, as time passed. Two or three times she had laughed whole-heartedly at some droll remark of his. They had thrown off much of the restraint which marked the beginning of their intercourse. They conversed freely of books, the mountain, their several likes and dislikes, and on a hundred other subjects such as a man and a girl will conjure up between them.

"Now," said Connie, as he neared the sugar pine, "I think I've earned a rest."

Deliberately he walked to the tree and sat on the ground at its base. From the beginning he had derived a sort of grim pleasure from doing his work well. He had wondered what would be the result, at least on the girl's part, if he were to shrik. But he did not mind the work—liked it, in fact—so he did it well, and took his rests when he thought them earned.

Carrie made no reply. She did not even look up from her reading. Connie sat there a time, fanning himself with his cap, then, his eyes always on her, slipped his sheaf of papers from his pocket, laid it in the grass and stealthily covered it over with dry, loose earth.

So far so good. There was a twitch of satisfaction at the corners of Connie's good-humored mouth as he picked up the cradle and returned to his task.

Sometime near 12 o'clock that night he awoke with a start. What had awakened him? He could not tell. He lay listening.

From the distant ridges came the weird ycdeling of coyotes, the quarreling of hell-divers from the lake, and a tiny metallic scratching close at hand.

The moon sailed from behind a rack of clouds.

There at the barred window appeared the head and shoulders of a man.

"Sis-s-st!" came a warning hiss.

Connie rose from his mattress and tiptoed close to the window, keeping at one side. There he waited.

"Sis-s-st!"

"Who are you?" said Connie in low tones.

"Oh, you've got me, have you? Don't make a sound. I'm a friend. I got something to tell you."

Connie muttered his displeasure. Gray had, no doubt, received the message. But it was not like Gray to thus disregard his injuctions and send a man where he was not wanted.

He stepped before the window into the moonlight.

A broad-shouldered, flannel-shirted man with an enormous hat on his head confronted him.

"Who are you?" Connie asked again.

"Sh! Not so noisy, pardner. I'm Gus Hedderly. Maybe you've heard of me. Gus Hedderly of Hedderly & Ham. Hedderly & Ham's the H-H outfit, you know. That's our brand, H-H. I got your note in the turnips, all right. Pretty slick, Mr. Kissilman."

"You got my note?"

"Sure thing, I got her. And I'm here to help you out."

"But—but I thought the vegetables were to be sold to the campers down at the resorts."

"Well, most o' old Gunster's truck is sold to them. But there's a store down there, and they take part of the nigger's load. We trade at the store. Cowmen ain't got time, nor inclination, to fuss with a vegetable garden. And that's how I come to get your bunch o' turnips and find the note. Now what's ol' Gunster tryin' to do to you?"

"Did you go to the sugar pine and read my other note?"

"Well, yes. I just come from there. You see, I know ol' Gunster for years. He's a bad actor, believe me. He's sent bullets whinin' thru the leaves after me before now. So, when I read the note in the turnips I says to myself: 'There's ol' Gunster up to some devilment again, and this guy's likely in trouble and needin' help.' I saw you come to the place with the nigger a few nights ago, and I never saw you leave. You see, I've been watchin' since I saw you come. Ol' Gunster never allows any one on his place—hunters least of all. I took notice o' your huntin' clothes and I wondered what o' Gunster was up to. See? So I bin keepin' watch. Now, when I got the note in the turnips, I——"

"WHY didn't you send it to Mr. Gray, as I directed?" said Connie crisply.

"That's what I'm tryin' to explain. I says to myself when I read the note: 'This city man's in trouble. Ol' Gunster's keepin' him on the place.' And I sneaked out in the forest and trained my glasses down here. I see you workin' and that girl straddlin' her hoss with a six-gun, or the ol' man always hangin' round near you. Then my glass showed me the bars on the little log house up the arroyo. And one evenin' I saw the ol' man herd you into it and lock the door.

"So, don't you see, I says to myself: 'This fellow's a prisoner, and there mustn't be any time lost by tryin' to connect with this Gray in Los Angeles. So tonight I sneaks to the sugar pine, and your other note tells me what I already know. And here I am, to help you put the ol' man on the skids. Believe me, he's had it comin' to him for ten years or more."

Connie clicked his teeth with disappointment.

"You mean well, no doubt," he whispered, "but, frankly, I'm sorry you took things into your own hands. What I wrote in my second note was meant solely for the eyes of the man to whom I addressed it. I'm in no danger at all. I made that clear in the note. In fact, I'm enjoying this thing as an adventure. I thank you, I'm sure, but—well, just drop it now and forget that you read that second note. Go and get it and mail it to Mr. Gray, will you? He'll pay you. Or, better still, can't you make the trip to Los Angeles and explain everything in person? I'll write another note for you to take to Gray, instructing him to pay all your expenses and whatever wages you consider the thing worth. Do that, will you?"

Gus Hedderly was silent a time.

"I know," he said at last. "You think you're going to get some fun outa this girl, Carrie."

Connie said nothing.

"Don't make any mistake about her, pardner. She's a bad actor, too. She pulled a gun on me and dared me to open my mouth again. I was heeled, too. But, believe me, I didn't try to pull, nor I didn't open my face, either. She's a chip off the old block. They're both bad ones, Mr. Kissilman."

"I'll take my chances."

"I got a file here. I could have you out of there in fifteen minutes. Then we'll go get the sheriff and——"

"Not on your life, Mr. Hedderly. I don't want the situation changed in the least. Now will you oblige me in the matter?"

There was a long pause while Hedderly seemed to study deeply.

"Well, you're the doctor," he said at last. "I'll go to Los Angeles and see this man Gray."

"And you will tell him——"

"I'll tell him what I know to be the truth," said the cowman crossly, abruptly swinging away from the window and vanishing into the night.

Connie swore softly. For half an hour he sat cross-legged on his mattress, wondering what was best to do. Then suddenly there came Hedderly's familiar hiss at the window.

Connie eagerly hurried to the bars.

"I went back to the lone sugar pine for the second note," whispered the cowman, "to take to Gray."

"Well?"

"It's gone."

"Gone?" A long pause, during which the young manufacturer's brain worked swiftly.

"Now, look here, Hedderly——"

"Honest to God, Mr. Kissilman, it ain't there. I swear——"

"You didn't look carefully. You didn't put it back where you found it."

"I did. I did, too, Mr. Kissilman."

"Go back and search thoroly."

"I tell you I did. It's gone, and that's all there is to it."

"Now, look here, Mr. Hedderly, I won't have this. I'm the leading actor in this farce, and I demand the center of the stage. You go and get that note, and take it to Gray. I'll instruct Gray to give you a hundred dollars. Surely that will make it worth your time."

"But I tell you the note isn't there!"

"All right. I can find it. You may file me out, Mr. Hedderly."

"Oh, may I?"

And he wheeled angrily from the window and hurried away thru the trees.

Connie grabbed the bars, shaking them in sudden fury, and called as loudly as he dared. But Hedderly vanished, and soon there came the distant clickety-click of his horse's hoofs.

Another half hour passed. Connie had just composed his mind for sleep, when once more came the vaquero's hiss at the window.

Connie jumped eagerly, as before.

"You made me sore, Mr. Kissilman," said Hedderly, "and, by golly, I had a mind, when I rode off, to just let you go to the devil. But I got to thinkin' it over, and I says to myself: 'It's his funeral, not mine. If he wants to take the risk o' never gettin' away from here, it ain't none o' my business. I'll make a hundred dollars out of it, and I reckon that ought to satisfy me. And I'll just go back and see if I did miss that note. And if I find it, I'll take it to Gray, just as he says, and keep my mouth shut, collect the hundred dollars and forget the whole d—n business. So I rode back to the sugar pine and——'"

"Yes, and what?"

"And, sure enough, I found it. But how I ever missed it, I can't tell you. It was exactly where I found it the first time. But I swear to——"

Connie held his peace. This ruse seemed so thin, so apparent, that he could not trust himself to make any comment. What was Hedderly trying to gain by duplicity—more money?

"Well," he said, "I'm glad you found it. But, perhaps, after all, you had better give it to me and get busy at filing me out."

"Oh, changed your mind, eh?"

"Well, my whole plan has been muddled, and I guess I'd better——"

"But if I turn you loose, where does

(Continued on Page 16.)

AN OLD FAVORITE

A Poem That Has Grown Yellow In Many Scrap Books

One Each Week — Selection No. 8

The Charge of the Light Brigade

BY ALFRED TENNYSON.

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
"Forward the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!" he said;
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldiers knew
Some one had blundered;
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die;
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of hell
Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabers bare,
Flash'd as they turned in air
Sabering the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd;
Plunged in the battery smoke,
Right thru the line they broke,
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the saber stroke,
Shatter'd and sunder'd,
Then they rode back, but
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to left of them,
Cannon to right of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero, fell,
That they had fought so well
Came thru the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?
O, the wild charge they made!
All the world wonder'd.
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

The Strange Sisters

By Harry Adler

The Story From the Beginning

BULL WHITE was the leader of a gang of crooks. In the underworld he was looked up to with awe and fear. In the stratum of society in which he moved, he was, if you please, no other than

E. LANCASTER WHITE, man of the world, admired and respected. Bull White has a secret. And this was it: He had an illegitimate daughter from a one-time mistress of his, long ago dead. This daughter knew herself only as

JOSIE BURKE, the daughter of Annie Burke. But Lancaster White—Bull White, if you wish—also had a legitimate daughter,

BEATRICE WHITE, who moved in the best of circles and wanted for nothing.

Josie Burke was a female crook, working in the same gang with

FRANK LOGAN, who aspired to take Bull White's position as the leader of crookdom. Bull White had assigned Josie and Frank to plunder the safe of the Wellingtons, the night of their house party on Long Island, when he, White, would be also present with his daughter. But a complication happened. Beatrice hearing a noise came down in the night, and the safe-opening episode was brought to an interruption, in which Frank Logan chloroformed Beatrice, and Josie, stripping off her clothes, tripped upstairs so that Beatrice's absence would not be discovered. How did she know she could get away with it? Simply because by her flashlight she found that her face was a "dead ringer" for that of Beatrice.

Upstairs, she wound up by going to sleep with

MADELINE WELLINGTON, daughter of the Wellingtons, who spent several hours advising her to cultivate and treat kindly

ARTHUR AVERY, who cared very much for Beatrice. In the meantime Frank Logan carried the sleeping, chloroformed girl to the waiting automobile and took her to a house on West Twenty-Second street, New York, where he locked her in a room to keep her tongue quiet. Then he prepared to watch developments.

As for Josie, now walking on treacherous ground as Beatrice among Beatrices friends, she was actually enjoying the experience. Arthur Avery seemed to see in her a more wonderful and fascinating personality than ever before. Outside of the grounds she met up with Frank Logan, and told him she was going to go back as Beatrice to New York, to find out who she was supposed to be and to successfully take that person's part, for a while at least.

In the meantime Beatrice, by playing on Logan's vanity and persuading him to drink more than was good for him, got very friendly with him. She felt that in time she might effect an escape from her prison in the house.

This story began in No. 52, the Ledger for Dec. 25. Back copies may be obtained from our agents or newsdealers.

Frank Rose Slowly and Stepped Forward Close to Her. His Face Was Ugly. "Getting Uppish, Eh?" He Sneered, His Thin Lips Twisting.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHETHER Josie or Arthur most enjoyed the ride to town would have been a difficult matter to determine. To Arthur it was a new Beatrice that sat beside him, chatting gayly; the air of cool disassociation that he had come to consider habitual with her was gone. Lacking also were the coldly intellectual observations with which Beatrice had been wont to repulse his warmer approaches.

Josie, on the other hand, reveled in the physical luxury and ease of the situation; she tingled with the thrill of adventure, past and yet to come. Furthermore, the company of the perfectly groomed, deferential young man beside her—so different from the coarse, evil associates of her daily life—possessed a distinct charm for her. Already this charm was beginning to grow on her to the point of causing her to dread the day that she must disappear from its range. However, that day was still in the future, and, putting it from her mind, she gave herself up to the thoro enjoyment of the moments at hand.

Within the city Josie began to wonder what their destination was. As yet she had received no clew as to this; nor, in fact, did she know anything about her supposed self or situation. Her name—Beatrice White—she knew, but where she lived, whether she had any family, and many other more or less important details she was utterly at sea about; from the undisguised lovemaking of Arthur she assumed that she was unmarried—but even this was by no means certain; lovemaking between married people—when not married to each other—was not at all common. Josie could only wait for such developments as might arise and depend on her quick wit and good duck to carry her thru.

Down Fifth avenue they drove, stopping at length before one of the huge, magnificent apartment-houses fronting the park. Arthur sprang out and assisted Josie to the ground. He escorted her up the steps, thru the portals of the building and across the softly velveted rotunda to the elevator. The smartly liveried negro youth nodded brightly to them:

"Good aft'noon, Miss White; good aft'noon, Mist' Av'ry."

The brass cage shot upward. The boy slid the door back and his passengers stepped out into the corridor. Shrewdly Josie lingered an imperceptible moment, letting Arthur take the lead. He stopped before a door and they were admitted by a maid.

Josie found herself in a luxurious room, furnished in all the exquisiteness of detail made possible by money in a modern age. As the maid approached Josie no doubt as to the latter's identity showed itself in the girl's expression.

As tho born to the habit Josie permitted the maid to relieve her of her wraps. The maid held out her hand for the cap that Arthur was holding, but he declined her services.

"I'll have to run along now, Beatrice," he said. "I'll have my man see that your things are brought up."

"Won't you stay?" invited Josie; but he shook his head.

"No; I'd like to, but I have some business to attend to."

He left and the girl remained alone to face whatever hazards might lie before her.

Josie followed the maid, surmising that the latter would take her wraps to "her" room. Thru the adjoining dining-room they went and beyond that into a bedroom—evidently Beatrice White's.

The maid hung the wraps away in the clothes-closet.

"Does mademoiselle wish anything?" she inquired, turning to leave the room.

"Not at present, thank you," replied Josie. "You may go."

Josie looked about her at the exquisitely appointed room: at the ivory bed, with its daintily worked covers, the harmonizing dressing table, with its array of feminine beautifying accessories; the bright blue rug and the attractive pictures on the wall. A great resentment welled up in Josie's heart against the girl whom she was impersonating; a day or two, or perhaps a week, she would enjoy all this, then she must relinquish it to this other girl.

Josie tossed her head, impatient with herself. Such thoughts were foolish, she realized. For the time being this was all hers; then why spoil its enjoyment?

Curiously she began to examine more closely the various things in the room. She opened drawers and examined their contents; but nothing other than a wealthy young girl's dainty lingerie revealed itself.

SHE was interrupted in her inspection by the maid entering, followed by Arthur's man, carrying the luggage that Beatrice had taken to the Wellington's house party. The man deposited his burdens and left; the maid was preparing to unpack the bags when suddenly Josie remembered her own garments, which she had packed away in one of the suitcases.

"Just leave those for the present," she said. "I feel tired and do not wish to be disturbed."

The maid withdrew. Josie pounced on the suitcase, took out her clothes and buried them at the bottom of a drawer.

She resumed her inspection of the room, reaching at length a drawer in the dressing table. Here she came upon a prize indeed, a diary. Josie almost cried aloud in joy at this discovery. No planning of hers could have brought her as effective an aid in her masquerade as this detailed daily record.

She curled up comfortably in the softest chair in the room and spread open upon her lap the leather bound volume.

When, several hours later, the maid knocked at the door, Josie had become possessed of all the essential facts of Beatrice's life for the past year, besides an infinite variety of detail about the girl's friends, their names, nicknames, peculiarities, habits and so forth. She had learned that besides her father the girl had no relatives, that she was single and had been proposed to by Arthur Avery on an average of about every five weeks, but that she was constitutionally disinclined toward matters of the heart. With an air of triumph Josie laid the book aside as the maid entered. She felt fortified now for any development.

"Will mademoiselle dress now?" the maid inquired deferentially. "It is getting late."

"Yes, Heloise." The name was but one of the myriad scraps of essential information just absorbed from the diary.

Over the matter of her hair Josie debated inwardly, but at length decided in favor of retaining her own manner of dressing it. It was inconceivable that two human beings should be absolutely alike in every detail and should she comb her hair after Beatrice's style such minute variation in appearance as might exist would become more liable to detection; as it was, however, any difference in appearance could be attributed to the changed style of hair dress. This, likewise, could be used to explain the changed air and manner to which Madeline and Arthur had already called her attention.

It was a new sensation to Josie, this being waited on and dressed by a deferential young girl, and she found it by no means unpleasant. It gave a sense of superiority, of power of authority—and what mortal is proof to the thrill that these things give?

"Is Mr. White home?" inquired Josie.

"Yes, mademoiselle," Heloise replied, straightening up from the last snap. "Just a few moments ago he arrive."

Her mistress dressed, the maid left to take up her other duties. From the diary Josie had gleaned that the household consisted of Beatrice and her father and two servants—an elderly woman for the cooking and rougher housework, and Heloise, acting as Beatrice's personal maid and doing the lighter work.

Josie, braced for the meeting with her "father," stepped out into the dining-room; this was the last and most difficult trial to which she would be put. If she could cap her preceding successes by deceiving the girl's own father then she could feel secure indeed in her masquerade.

The dining-room was empty, but as the table was set for two she inferred that Mr. White was to be at dinner. Idly she strolled about, keenly inspecting both that room and the drawing-room. She heard a door open and shut behind her and heard heavy footsteps approaching. The crucial moment was at hand.

Josie, with her hand on the draperies separating the two rooms, turned to meet the father of Beatrice. Slowly approaching from the other side of the room was Bull White.

CHAPTER IX.

IT WAS lucky for Josie that her grasp was firm; otherwise she surely would have betrayed herself. After the first moment of stunning shock at the sight of Bull White the significance of Beatrice's surname, which had hitherto escaped her, dawned full upon her intelligence and she at once realized the import of Bull's presence. He whom she and her associates knew as Bull White, crook gang leader, was likewise a wealthy, respectable citizen and, what was at the moment more important, father of the girl she was impersonating!

White, at first sight of the girl, had given a start. If he hadn't known it to be impossible he would have thought it was Josie standing before him. Josie read the bewilderment in his eyes. She stepped forward:

"How do you like my new way of combing my hair, papa?" she inquired.

"Oh! That's it, is it?" White's face cleared. He took the girl's hands in his and bending over her kissed her forehead. "Anything looks becoming to you, Beatrice," he said gallantly.

He pulled out her chair for her; then seated himself opposite.

"But I must say," he went on, "that I prefer your old style. This reminds me——" He stopped and a scowl crossed his features.

Josie knew well enough what it reminded him of.

"Reminds you of what?" She could not refrain from asking the question.

"Certain unpleasant things and people," White replied shortly.

Heloise entered and commenced serving dinner. White ate in silence, only occasionally rousing himself to address stray remarks to Josie. He drank heavily thruout the meal and a deep scowl overcast his face. The girl had no difficulty in guessing the cause of White's mood; he had probably just returned from his interview with Frank and had learned of the failure of the night before.

"Oh, papa!" Josie said. "There was a robbery attempted at the Wellington's last night!"

"Attempted!" The sarcasm that would have been totally lost in Beatrice was very meaningful to Josie. "With what success?"

"Oh, none at all. They were very clumsy burglars."

"Yes!" bitterly.

"I almost think I could do better myself," Josie went on; "or you."

White twisted his face into a sour smile—if, indeed, any contortion of his features could be graced by the title of smile. "I'll have to try my hand at it some day," he said.

"Oh, won't you let me help you?" Josie cried. "That would be a lot of fun!"

"Well, you couldn't do worse than—than some burglars I've heard of," White grunted. "Was anything taken at the Wellington's?"

"No; they merely broke into the house, but they were frightened away before they got into anything. They must have wanted to get into the jewel safe in the library. The queer thing," Josie went on, keenly watching White's face, "is that they must have had some accomplice on the inside. The screws of one of the window catches had been removed and wooden pegs substituted. The window lock was lying on the floor where it had been pushed out."

"Ah!" It was merely a breath inhalation. "Have they any suspicion—as to who this accomplice is?"

"They think it must be one of the servants." Josie was enjoying herself hugely.

White recovered his composure.

"Quite likely it is," he remarked, resuming interest in his plate.

"Yes," Josie observed. "There are so many scoundrels these days posing as respectables that one never can tell who

one's servants or even friends are."

"What was it that disturbed the burglars?" White asked, ignoring the girl's last remark.

"It hasn't been learned," she said. Then she recollected the story that Frank had told White and she saw her opportunity to protect herself in her own personality as "Josie."

"But I know," she supplemented her statement.

"You do?"

"Yes." Josie toyed with her silver. "I couldn't sleep so I went down to the library for a book. I—I interrupted the burglars."

WHITE laid down his knife and fork and keenly studied the girl.

"What—what did you see?" he inquired.

"Why, there were a man and a girl," she said. "I didn't see the man very plainly, his face was shielded from me; but I got a good look at the girl; I could recognize her, I am sure, if I saw her again. She very much resembled me."

"Did you give the Wellingtons a description of her?"

"No—I told you they didn't find out anything. I didn't tell them that I saw the burglars."

"Why?"

"Oh, I don't know. They ran as soon as I entered the room and as no damage was done what is the use of stirring up a fuss now? It would only mean a lot of disagreeable policemen prowling around and asking questions and interviewing one, and a lot of vulgar publicity in the papers. So I thought it best to keep quiet and if they can't learn anything they will probably let the matter drop."

"I think you did quite right," he approved. "You really showed remarkable judgment for a girl in such a matter."

"Do you think so?" and Josie had great difficulty in restraining a ringing laugh. It was really very funny.

During the course of the following days Josie had many more occasions for inward laughter. But her periods of serious thought were much more frequent. She had an opportunity now to observe from the inside a side of life with which heretofore she had never come in contact; and, observing, a powerful distaste with her old life grew within her. Free in a sense that life had been; yet viewed from another angle it was a life of the veriest slavery—slavery to fear and unwholesome hazard. Haunted day and night by the danger of capture, a creature of the night and the world's byways, forced to associate with the smallest minds, minds whose sole concern was the originating and carrying out of assaults upon organized society—she now saw truly the life she had been living. Deeply as she had hated White before, her feeling toward him now grew still more bitter. That he should be living this life of social respectability and ease, in comparative safety, maintained by the dangerous activities of herself and her confederates, galled her unbearably. Old-time robber chieftains had at least shared the dangers and hardships of the lowlier members of their bands; but White—

Josie telephoned to Frank every day or so from a public telephone booth to assure herself that Beatrice was still safe and to prevent Frank becoming uneasy; but as to her own whereabouts she refused to enlighten him. The knowledge of White's secret was information that she did not dare to share with any one. It was a weapon that she would guard jealously for her own advantage. Certainly, if she should choose a confidant it would not be a weakling like Frank. So she evaded him with promises to tell him everything when she should rejoin him; and when he at times showed signs of becoming restive under this treatment a few soft words and vaguely hinted promises readily brought him around again.

Towards Arthur Josie's feelings were rapidly assuming an embarrassing character. Typifying, as he well might, the life of gentility and refinement that had thrown its glamor over the girl, it was but natural that he should exert a powerful attraction for her; besides which, Arthur was an entirely delightful young man taken by himself alone, and his ardor was rather overwhelming. He had loved deeply the old Beatrice; this new Beatrice, possessing all the old one's charms with the added magnetism of a forceful, delicious vitality, enraptured him completely and he lost no opportunity of pressing the advantage of the apparently receptive attitude that she seemed suddenly to have developed. Numerous social events threw them continually in each other's society, in addition to which Arthur was constantly in attendance on the girl.

Besides the pleasure that Josie derived from this association it worked a distinct advantage to her in another respect: Monopolization of her attention by Arthur relieved her of the necessity of mingling very much with many others of Beatrice's circle of acquaintances, and thus materially reduced the difficulty of the deception she was practicing. But after the first few days Josie lost all fear or nervous tension on this score. No untoward incident of any kind developed. Of White she saw very little and at social functions little was required of her besides the usual polite amenities. Her physical appearance was utterly beyond suspicion, and such slight differences in speech and manner as existed were either unnoticed or, if noticed, easily passed over and accounted for as the variableness in mood of a young girl.

It was at a dance three days after embarking on her adventure that Josie again met Madeline.

"Beatrice," Madeline demanded, cornering Josie early in the evening, "what have you been doing to Arthur? Why, he is positively beaming!"

But an hour later Madeline was addressing herself to Arthur, who was standing now rather dejectedly in a corner.

"What have you been doing to Beatrice?" she asked him in bewilderment. "I have never seen her show as much life and gayety in all the years I have known her."

"I don't know which way I prefer her," gloomed Arthur. "I used to have no trouble keeping her to myself all evening. But then her conversation was so—well, so impersonally intellectual. Now when she has livened up and responds normally——" He grinned; he and Madeline were old, old friends, and thoroly understood each other. "Now she puts in the whole evening dancing with these other nimble-footed ninnies. I've danced a few dances with her—but I can't exclude these other fellows."

But Arthur's gloom did not last long. Josie's actions were coquettishly premeditated and when she thought Arthur had been tormented sufficiently she promptly canceled the balance of her dance card and ensconced herself with him in a palm-secluded niche. At fleeting moments she paused to ponder, horrified, on what she was committing her original to be—but she laughed those passages off; these were her moments, by right of peril-braved conquest, and she intended to enjoy them to the very utmost.

A Woman's Love

To you, Beloved, I have lifted my face
As one who is amorous of summer sunshine
To a revel of light, a warmth, a wonder—
I rest in the glow of your presence.

To you, Beloved, my swift feet bear me,
As a child, entering a wild, free garden;
Your arms are all the garlands I have ever chosen,
Your strength is my shapely tree.

And to you, Beloved, I have listened long,
And my ears remember a well-learned music,
Your voice surging sweet thru dusk into darkness,
My strong, flooding stream of spring!

And to you, Beloved, what may I offer?
Naught but my life—the moments uncounted—
Lips all untouched—a dream shared with no other—
And my soul's little flame thrice lighted by your love!
Take, then, the love that a woman would offer,
For to you, Beloved, I have lifted my face!

—MARGUERITE WILKINSON.

CHAPTER X.

AGONIZING day after agonizing day diabolically paraded its interminable length before Bearice in her prison. The second day Frank brought her a bundle of morning newspapers.

"They'll help pass the time a bit," he rather shamefacedly apologized for his thoughtfulness, as he tossed them on the bed.

On his departure Beatrice avidly absorbed them, one after the other; but not a word did she find concerning her disappearance. Utterly baffled by this inexplicable silence and apparent inacticity of her father and friends Beatrice flung herself on the bed and gave herself to unrestrained weeping. Truly she seemed forgotten and forsaken, utterly abondoned to whatever fate her captor might choose to visit upon her.

But that was the last time that Beatrice gave way to hysterics. When that spasm exhausted its strength she arouse with the calm realization that whatever hope for escape she might entertain must depend on her own unaided efforts. What explanation there might be for the outside silence she could not tell. It might be, of course, that her father thought that by working secretly he might be able more surely to effect her safe release; but she resolutely determined to put from her mind all hope of outside rescue and concentrate her energies on herself attaining her freedom.

Not an inch of her prison but received Beatrice's minutest scrutiny, with the result that she reached the conviction that the only escape from that room must be by the door; and escape thru the door could but be thru one channel—Frank.

Beatrice, in the days following, diligently pursued her tactics of the first night. A little skilful playing on his all too evident vanity and she was soon aware of all the vulnerabilities of his character. How to attack them was the problem that now confronted her.

The aroma almost constantly exhaled by Frank gave her one lead that she considered valuable.

"It gets pretty dull here," she remarked one day, "and these meals, while pretty good, are rather—dry. They would be much more appetizing if there was something to go with them," and she looked knowingly at Frank.

He grinned. He had heard of the alcoholic proclivities of "high society" folk, so the request did not strike him as strange.

"It's pretty hard to get good stuff these days," he said, "but I'll try."

"I wish you would. And bring a couple of glasses, too," Beatrice added.

Frank looked at the girl and gave a slow, clumsy wink. He had heretofore maintained an impersonal attitude toward her, as befitted the theatrical "chivalrous bandit" pose he affected. But as he left this time there was a look in his eye that rather frightened Beatrice; on the other hand, she reflected, that might be another avenue of attack.

On his next visit Frank brought a bottle of champagne that must have cost him a no inconsiderable amount.

"No moonshine stuff, this," he proudly announced, pulling the cork. "The real, genuine goods that papa used to drink before grape juice was invented."

He had obeyed Beatrice's request to bring two glasses; he filled them both and sliding one across the table to the girl he lifted the other.

"Here's to the gamest sport I've ever held prisoner!" he toasted.

Beatrice gave a small sip at her own glass and as Frank put down his own, empty, she reached for the bottle to fill it again. But Frank shook his head, altho he eyed the bottle longingly.

"No," he said, "nothing doing. Got to be careful of that stuff, you know. It don't exactly grow on bushes these days."

He leaned forward and leering into Beatrice's face laid his hand heavily on her arm.

"But say, kid, them lips of yours is mighty juicy fruit and I'd sure like to get drunk of 'em."

He half rose, as tho to carry out the suggestion of his clumsy metaphor. Beatrice sprang to her feet, tearing his hand from her arm. Her face was pale, her eye flashed indignantly and her lips trembled in resentment.

"You—— You" she cried.

Frank rose and stepped forward close to her. His face was ugly.

"Getting uppish, eh?" he sneered, his thin lips twisting. "Getting particular! You want your booze all right, but too stuck-up to be sociable with the fellow that's good enough to get it for you!" He seized Beatrice's arm and roughly shook her. "Now you look here, kid—let me tell you something: I've been pretty decent to you. I could get away with anything I wanted to and nobody could stop me; but I'm a gentleman and don't go in for the rough stuff. But when I want to be sociable—by the gods! You'd better be sociable; I warn you!"

Beatrice's flesh crawled in terror before his fierce advance. Only too well did she realize the truth of his assertion; who, indeed, was to stop him in anything he might attempt? Again strategy was her only recourse. With a terrible effort conquering her crawling repulsion she laid a hand on Frank's shoulder.

"Now don't get angry," she said softly. "I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. I—I was only playing."

"Playing!" he snorted. "What bunk are you giving me now?"

"It is true," she went on, desperately striving to convince him. "I—I just wanted to see whether you—you really—felt that way—about me." A purr was in her voice.

"Well, I'll be d—d!" Frank exploded, nonplussed. "You never can tell about a woman!"

"You see," Beatrice hastily pursued her advantage, "I've never met a man like you before." This, of course, was strictly true. "You are so different from the ordinary men I know that I——"

The youth's voracious vanity eagerly swallowed the bait, leaping instantly at the implied flattery.

"You don't half know me yet," he boasted. "Just wait till you do."

He advanced to carry out his original purpose; but Beatrice held him off, this time, however, with a coquettish flash in her eye.

"But I'm not as easy as that," she protested. "Perhaps after I do know you better——" and she let his all too ready imagination run its self-gratifying way.

"All right," he said. "You owe me that kiss then for next time," and laughing, very highly pleased with himself and his apparent conquest, he left the room.

NOT a wink did Beatrice sleep that night, in mortal terror lest Frank conceive the idea of paying her a nocturnal visit. But nothing untoward occurred.

Every visit of Frank's thereafter brought a repetition of his amorous advances; and each time she put him off with soft, artful coquetry, this, however, becoming each time more difficult as his ardor mounted and his impatience grew. And day and night Beatrice racked her brain for some scheme whereby she might turn to advantage this development. Each passing day made a solution of her problem more imperative, for not much longer could her art repulse him; indeed, once he had managed to plant a fleeting kiss on her cheek, and tho her flesh had crawled she had been forced to accept the caress.

Then, in a brief instant one afternoon the plan leaped into her brain—and the simplicity of it nearly took her breath away. She marveled that it had escaped her before this, so obvious and perfect it now seemed.

Impatiently Beatrice awaited the evening, when Frank should bring her her evening meal. As if to torment her this particular night he delayed, it being late before he came; but come at length he did.

"I'm not hungry," Beatrice said. "I don't feel like eating now." She put the package of food aside and drew forward a bottle of champagne, of which very little had been used, and the two glasses. "But I am very thirsty," she said. "Won't you drink with me? I know it's scarce—but don't be a piker."

Frank ruffled at the taunt.

"Piker!" he said. "I guess I ain't no piker! Fill 'em up!"

Beatrice did so and Frank gulped his drink down swiftly, extending his glass for refilling. The girl, scarcely sipping her own wine, plied Frank generously. She wished him to be well befuddled before attempting her plan. As he drank Frank talked garrulously, first of himself, then maundering on to boozy protestations of affection for Beatrice. He leaned across the table and drew her head towards his—and this time she did not resist. She was staking all on this play.

The touch of her lips inflamed Frank.

"God!" he exclaimed. "You're sure some kid, I'll tell the world! You're just the pal for a guy like me!" Forgotten was his similar protestation to Josie.

The wine was soon exhausted; but the gap was immediately filled by a bottle of more pungent poison that Frank drew from his hip pocket.

Beatrice moved around the table and, slipping onto his lap, put her arm about his neck, filling his glass again the while. Her lips purred softly into his ears and at judicious intervals she brushed his lips with her own, sending fire shooting thru his body.

When, after an hour of this, Frank rose unsteadily to his feet, his brain, inflamed by alcohol and passion, was but a hectic fuddle. He drew Beatrice to him for a last kiss before leaving.

"Some kid!" he chuckled thickly. "I'll say you are!"

He put his cap on his head.

"I've got to go now, kid," he said, shuffling waveringly to the door. He was holding Beatrice's hand; or, rather, he thought he was holding her hand, but she it was whose fingers were the active agents.

SHE followed him to the door, where, releasing his hand, he fumbled drunkenly with the key. At length he got the door open and stepped out into the hallway. As he turned to shut the door Beatrice leaned thru the aperture, holding her face up tantalizingly for a parting kiss. He chuckled gleefully.

"Hate to quit, eh, kid? You're sure a bear when you get going good! Don't

worry; I've got to go now, but I'll be back again—tonight!"

He bent over and kissed the upturned lips. Beatrice, resting her weight on the doorknob with one hand was swiftly feeling at the lock with the other; her fingers found the knob of the lock and turning it so as to draw the bolt inward she slipped down the small lever that held the bolt securely in that position.

Withdrawing her face from Frank's she stepped back into the room, pulling the door closed behind her. The bolt of the lock was held withdrawn!

Exhausted Beatrice dropped upon the bed, listening to Frank's unsteady footsteps retreating down the hall and descending the stairs. The strain she had been under during the past hour was terrific and she now lay gasping. Her plan had worked to perfection—thus far. It had all hinged on the nature of the lock. From the inside of the room she had, of course, been unable to see it, but from the sound she had heard each time Frank opened it and the fleeting glimpses she had caught of it as he entered she had felt certain that it was an ordinary night latch. Her surmise had been correct and now she was alone in the room—the door unlocked!

Beatrice listened breathlessly for the sound of the door slam that should tell of Frank's departure from the house. But no such sound came. For some little while there was silence below; then came the sound of the door slamming—but it was immediately followed by the sound of voices. Instead of Frank leaving, some other person had apparently entered the house and joined him. In a few minutes the door slammed again, and several more times. The hum of voices below became steadier. This had happened several times before during Beatrice's imprisonment and she had inferred that some sort of consultation was being held. With a sinking heart she now realized that such a consultation was again in progress. With the house below filled, how could she escape? She must restrain her impatience and wait until their business should be concluded and they should disperse. Then, with a shock, she realized that such a course was out of the question. Frank had promised to return—meaning undoubtedly when the conference below should be over!

Beatrice sprang to her feet. It must be now. She had staked everything on this attempt and she must carry it thru to a conclusion. Desperate tho the project was, she must venture below, despite the gathered band, and depend on her wit and luck to gain the street in safety. As to the arrangement of the house she knew nothing, having been blindfolded on being brought up the first night. She was afraid to prowl around, attempting to find some other means of exit than by the stairs; she was sure, in the dark, to trip over obstacles and create noises that must certainly attract attention from below. Everything considered, she decided on the stairs as her best hope.

It was a blind, desperate venture that she was about to take; but altho her heart quaked Beatrice's determination and step were firm as she cautiously opened the door and stepped out into the dark hallway.

And now it appears that the "showdown" is present. But read in the next and last installment of what Beatrice found when she reached the first floor of the Twenty-Second street house. Write and tell us, when you've finished this well-plotted piece of fiction, just what you think of it as entertainment. We'll be glad to read your letters.

The House in the Mist

(Continued From Page 5)

on hand to receive them hospitably. I laid a wicked, blunt-nosed automat on the tabouret beside my armchair, pulled out a book, and laid the cigar box where I could reach it easily. At the same time I made reasonably certain that my room would not be entered without appreciable difficulty. I locked the windows, hooked the screen door which led to the balcony, and locked the door to the hall. Against the latter, as an extra precaution, I propped a chair, with the back so placed against the handle that the door could not be opened, even were the lock picked.

I reached into my pocket for a match, and struck a smooth, roundish object. Confound it, here was the diamond. It was quite evident that whoever had left it in my room, knew very well that it was in my possession. Under the circumstances I should as soon have had some sticks of dynamite in my pocket as that accursed jewel. At least no one would have tried to deprive me of dynamite by force. I looked about the room for a place of concealment, but saw nothing which a determined visitor would not be sure to search. In turn I considered and discarded my tobacco jar, the bedding of my davenport, the back of the gas log and the bookcase linen closet as hiding places.

Finally, I seized my morning paper, which I had thrown into the wastebasket, crumpled it into a loose ball with the diamond inside, and tossed the bundle back into the basket. Then I settled myself down to read.

I have no mind to argue the question of whether or not man is equipped with a sixth sense—a sense of nearness of things. I do know, however, that it was some such sense which roused me from the doze into which I had fallen over my book. Without opening my eyes, without becoming perceptibly awake, I knew that I was not alone in the room.

Gradually as the drowsiness left my brain, and my faculties sharpened, I could make out the soft step with which someone was walking about. I recalled subconsciously the faint scrape which told me that the door of the book-case had been opened. A swish betrayed the fact that the curtain covering the corner where my clothes were hung had been withdrawn. It was when I heard the rustling of papers in the wastebasket, that I realized the need for action. Without opening my eyes and without betraying the fact that I was not still asleep, I let my right hand creep gradually nearer and nearer to the tabouret upon which I had laid my automatic.

The touch of the chill steel reassured me. I had never used a shooting iron in my life, nevertheless the feel of it in my hand gave me a sense of security. I waited for a moment, while gathering myself for a spring, then leaped up as dramatically as I could, pointed the weapon toward the book-case and shouted:

"Hands up!"

I was alone in the room. I felt the hair pulling on my scalp, and a cold trickle run along my spine. I gazed fearfully about me, hoping that I was only half awake, and that the sounds I had heard were not so real as they had seemed to be—that they were only parts of a disordered dream. I examined the book-case. It did not seem to have been disturbed. I looked at the corner where my clothes were hung. Everything seemed to be as I had last left it.

Finally I picked up the crumpled roll of paper in which I had concealed the Everett diamond.

The jewel was gone.

Here is mystery as deep and baffling as any Sherlock Holmes and his friend Watson ever grappled with. Our hero, modest and unassuming as he appears to be, evidently is a person who can think and act quickly in time of danger. That he will employ all means at his command to regain the famous Everett diamond, as well as solve the mystery that surrounds it, is assured by the character of the young man as it already has been revealed. The House in the Mist will surely please all who delight in deep mysteries and thrilling incidents.

* * *

Printing Press in England.

IN the beginning of the seventeenth century there were but nineteen print shops with a total of thirty-three presses in all London, and every one of these was under strict observation of both the archbishop of Canterbury and representatives of the company of stationers, it is recorded. Every page that was set up had to be examined by representatives of both, and the presses were locked and chained every night so that no one could secretly print anything. In case the printer did not obey the command of these censors he went to jail and for a man to secretly own a printing press was just one way of attempting suicide.

As a result of this a great many books were printed in Holland, especially on religious and political subjects, and smuggled over to the British isle for distribution. There was a very crafty belief among the ruling powers that careless distribution of books on subjects of man's advancement would not be good for the continuation of the powers mentioned, and there is more than one record of unfortunates having a hand chopped off or even a head, for the attempt to print books without consent or freedom of law.

* * *

Moral Tonic.

"NOTHING that comes out of a bottle will do you any good. What you need is a moral tonic."

These words were spoken by a regular physician to a business man, overworked, nervous, weary, irritable, who had called for treatment. His doctor was a man of broad mind and sterling common sense. After a thoro examination and skilful questioning he had given his conclusion. The physician assured him that he had no disease, physical or mental, but had fallen into the grip of morbid emotions, had permitted hatreds to develop within him. He had feelings that he could and must throw off if he wished to retain his health and his position in the business world. The physician insisted he must recognize his responsibility personally and use the strong moral forces within himself to correct them. Moral tonic is what the individual needs and is what the whole nation needs so much now.

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costs a penny

When you think of cost of living think of this:

The best breakfast dish in the world—Quaker Oats—costs only one cent per serving. Dishes which cost from 8 to 15 times that cannot compare with oats.

Quaker Oats yield in nutriment 1810 calories per pound, while round steak yields 890.

The oat is well-balanced. It contains 16 needed elements. As a body-builder and a vim-food it holds a unique place.

If it cost ten times a meat dish you would be wise to serve it. But the meat foods average ten times Quaker Oats.

Waste and Nutriment

Quaker Oats	
Water and waste	7.7%
Protein	16.7%
Fat	7.3%
Carbohydrates	66.2%
Minerals	2.1%

Sirloin Steak	
Water and waste	66.8%
Protein	16.5%
Fat	16.1%
Carbohydrates	None
Minerals	1%

Compare the waste and nutriment. Compare the calory cost — the energy measure of food value.

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Make Quaker Oats your basic breakfast all the time.

Serve the costlier foods at dinner and let the oat-dish average down the cost.

Quaker Oats

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Quaker Oats are flaked from queen grains only — just the rich, plump, flavory oats. We get but ten pounds from a bushel.

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Calories per Pound	
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Cost per 1,000 Calories	
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Average meats	45c
Average fish	50c
Young chicken	$1.66

15 cents and 35 cents per package

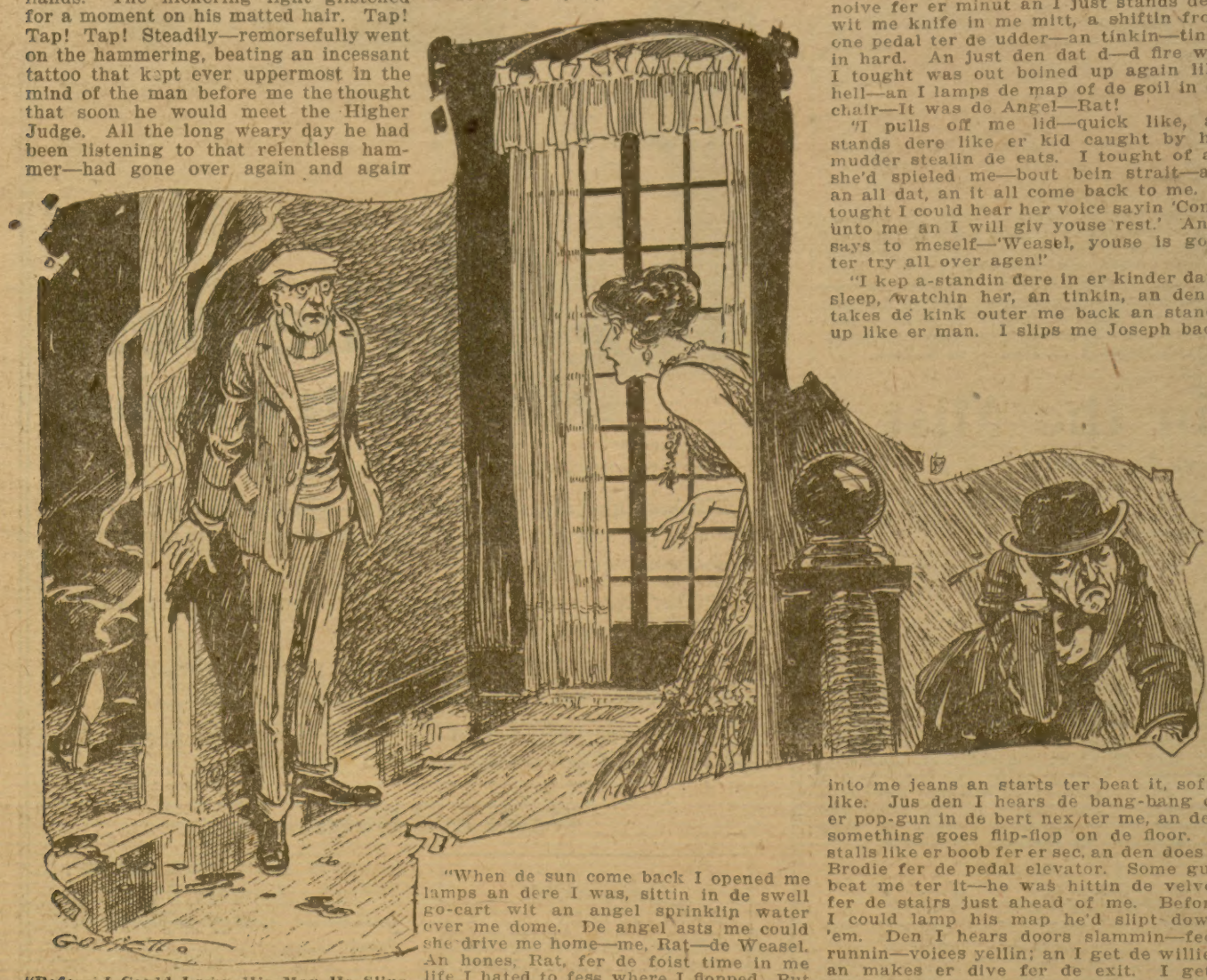
Except in far west and south

Packed in sealed round packages with removable cover

The Missing Ear

By Eric A. Darling

TAP! Tap! Tap! Outside the gray walls the hammer pounded mockingly, beating its relentless message upon the brain of the man within—the man who had been convicted of taking another's life, and must pay the forfeit the law exacted—must give up his own. As he listened to the gallows being constructed he shivered slightly, glancing appealingly at me, with the eyes of a dumb brute in pain. Thru the iron bars of the cell window a few rays of sunlight came straggling drearily—playing about the cold stone floor in fitful, shifting shadows. My client rested on his elbows, his chin cupped in his hands. The flickering light glistened for a moment on his matted hair. Tap! Tap! Tap! Steadily—remorsefully went on the hammering, beating an incessant tattoo that kept ever uppermost in the mind of the man before me the thought that soon he would meet the Higher Judge. All the long weary day he had been listening to that relentless hammer—had gone over again and again



"Before I Could Lamp His Map He Slips Down the Stairs."

with acute mental agony the last final scene, picturing vividly its horrors. How his hand shook—his voice was but a husky whisper—his cheek paper-white, as if all the blood had been drawn up—up to his staring eyes, fringing their borders with rims of vivid red.

"I'd like ter slip a note ter me pal, 'De Rat'," he said without raising his head. "Kin youse git me 'er sheet an' 'er scribble stick, boss?"

I hurried to grant his request, and stood by while he wrote this message:

"Dear Rat:

"I'm writin youse listenin ter de deat moosic outside—it ain't no ways pleasant an I guess De Weasel's gotter do er rope dance dis trip. I've kinder hoped an hoped right er-long dat tings would straiten out—but dere ain't no chance now—der gallus is most done I guess. I'm tryin' ter keep me noive, but it's D—d hard when yer gotter lissen ter dat noise outside and know its all fer youseself.

"Now dis is on der level, Rat—git me drift right. Dere ain't nothin in bein' crooked our way. Course—dere's lots er guys wearin ice an soup-an clothes dat's woiser den us mokes, but dey've gotter graft, er somebody put em hep. So lon's dey git away with it it ain't none of our business—we knows dat. But hones, kid, dere ain't nothin in dis rough stuff. I tought er passen it up long ergo, but ain't never done it. Funny how a guy sticks ter somethin even when he gits er hunch ter blow de goime. Look at me now—gotter hang fer croakin some guipe, what I ain't never done. It's hell, Rat, ter swing fer somethin yer ain't done. Member Lefty an Spot and Bull—Dey all hit de roupe rout. Take it from yer old pal, Rat, an quit while der quittin's good. Dat's me will ter youse, Rat—all I gotter leave ter me old pal, and I've tought it all out sittin here in the dark, all alone, an I've tought like hell. Dat's de answer, Rat—quit it cold!

"I ain't never spieled youse how I got pulled inter dis by de bulls, so I'll give it ter youse strait now.

"I was standin on er corner near 'Gyp's' on day—doin nuttin—just sandin aroun, when I lamped er classy turnout comin me way mighty fas. De once over was plenty ter lemme know dat de ponies tought dey was entered in de Futurity—an dat dey was no driver on de job. I beat's it out ter de center parade an puts er kink in de race by gloming onto de shoestring of one of der ponies. Dey stopped kinder sudden, likes all er brakes on wit de speed clutch wide open an someway I gotter smash over de bean dat made me go by-by.

"When de sun come back I opened me lamps an dere I was, sittin in de swell go-cart wit an angel sprinklin water over me dome. De angel asts me could she drive me home—me, Rat—de Weasel. An hones, Rat, fer de foist time in me life I hated to fess where I flopped. But I just glomed once inter her lamps an fessed de trut—yuh couldn't give her a bum steer, Rat—hones, yuh couldn't do it. So I told her an she come right down wit me an helpt Mayme put me on der hay. She slipt Mayme some'kale an after dat come ter see me every day till I hit der parade again. She uster read de Bible ter me an books bout all sorts er tings. Chee, Rat, tings was kinder not de same after that. I uster just lay dere an look an look an lissen ter her voice, soft like Mayme's uster be, and I tought to meself—I'll quit de rough stuff, git er job, an be strait!

"When I could wabble on me pins I steered fer dat job. De foist guy asts me where I'd woiked before. When I told him I'd allus woiked in jail he slips me de icy glare and said nuttin doin. Dey all says de same, cept one moke dat gives me a job breakin rocks. He said I'd had lots er practis an could do it fine. After dat I couldn't git nuttin. Dey all passes me up when I says jail, an dey all ast me wher I'd been last. I ain't never woiked nowheres cept in de pen or when I cracked er crib, an I tol de trut—allus. I promised de Angel I'd allus tell de trut!

"Den de kale give out—Mayme started ter raise hell, and lil Buster was a-yellin fer his eats—when dere worn't nothin. I got bughouse mad. I hadder do somethin an burglerin was de only ting I knowed about. So I mapped out er big plant in de su-bubs—I'd lamped it over before.

"De moon was all over de sky dat night, so I stalled around till it mosied along der trail. Dat was long after Chinaman's eats time, it was. I did a snake crowl up ter de back door, an it was open, so's it was a poipe ter work.

"Up in de doubel story I glomed onta a side bert near de front, dat looked like ready money. I eased de enter swing an lamped inside. Dere was er lil wax stick a-burnin on er table, an some fire in de fireplace over near de wall, jus a few lil coals, all red.

"I slipped in like er shadow—stiff! Over on de side near de windus was a big ledder chair. I gumshoes over ter it an gives it de once over. Dere was er young loidy in de chair, all in white wit bare neck an arms, a-sleepin dere. Her hair was all loost an roun her shoulders. She looked like she'd jus hit de Home Sweet Home from er tango trot, an flopped down in de chair all in—an fell asleep.

"I was toinin away ter beat it ter annuder bert when I gets me lamps glomed on her ice roun her troat. Dose d—d flames from de fire made de ice shine an flash sumpin fierce, an I just stands dere like er Brooklyn cop, just starin and tinkin how much old Ike would give me fer 'em and how good de kale would look ter Mayme, an how lil Buster would quit yellin fer his eats, an—an de fire died out—an de goil breathed kinder soft in her sleep——

"'Taking candy from er kid,' I tought ter meself, 'but I gotter git de coin somewheres.' So I leans over de goil an slips out me Joseph Rogers. Dis kid looked so sweet a-lyin dere I kinder los me noive fer er minut an I just stands dere wit me knife in me mitt, a shiftin from one pedal ter de udder—an tinkin—tinkin hard. An just den dat d—d fire wot I tought was out boined up again like hell—an I lamps de map of de goil in de chair—It was de Angel—Rat!

"I pulls off me lid—quick like, an stands dere like er kid caught by his mudder stealin de eats. I tought of all she'd spieled me—bout bein strait—an, an all dat, an it all come back to me. I tought I could hear her voice sayin 'Come unto me an I will giv youse rest.' An I says to meself—'Weasel, youse is goin ter try all over agen!'

"I kep a-standin dere in er kinder daysleep, watchin her, an tinkin, an den I takes de kink outer me back an stands up like er man. I slips me Joseph back into me jeans an starts ter beat it, soft-like. Jus den I hears de bang-bang of er pop-gun in de bert nex ter me, an den something goes flip-flop on de floor. I stalls like er boob fer er sec, an den does a Brodie fer de pedal elevator. Some guy beat me ter it—he was hittin de velvet fer de stairs just ahead of me. Before I could lamp his map he'd slipt down 'em. Den I hears doors slammin—feet runnin—voices yellin; an I get de willies an makes er dive fer de exit. I gets down de stairs with er ten-flat sprint jus in time ter tango inter de meat-grabbers of de main hash-slinger of de joint. He gets er Gotch on me troat an fore I could ease him wit er sleep-tap over der nut dere was six guys on top er me lights—an two was bulls.

"Some udder guy was woiken dat plant dat night, an made his getterway. But me—I was caught wit de goods—nuttin to it. I was packin me cannon—member when we got em both de same, Rat—yours an mine, at old Ike's—well tings was bad for De Weasel—alri. One pill-holder in me blow-blow jus happen ter be fer rent (I croaked Shadder's bull-pup dat moinin when he tried ter bit lil Buster, wit dat pill dat was missin) an de pill dey gouged from der old boy's bean just made de grade. Funny woin't it? An den me rep was all ter der bad—hones, Rat, I nefer knowed I did so many tings, an dey kep it on ice all erlong an flashed it on me at der trial. Nuttin ter it—'Guilty as hell,' says de joidge.

"But one ting was d—d funny—Rat. In de hall of de ranch wher I was pinched dey found de top of er ear—like as if dat udder guy hit his dome up again sumting sharp when he was beatin it, an was too busy ter stop fer jus an ear. Me moutpiece, spieled dat ter de joidge but it worn't no good. Still its d—d funny—ain't it Rat?

"Now kid—dis is all I wants to say. Youse was allus me pal, and Mayme's, too. I want yer ter kinder ease Mayme over de rough spots, an keep er lamp glomed on lil Buster. Make him hit de strait an narrer—an Rat, tink of me an quit de goime youseself. Quit it Rat—dat's all. I knows youse will do dis fer me an I tanks yer, Rat. So long—pal!"

THE man before me ceased writing—stared unseeingly ahead a moment, then silently folded the note. Outside the hammer stopped, and an abrupt stillness reigned; the scaffold was finished. The last flickering ray of sunlight caught the shadow of the gallows and passing beyond the iron bars of the prison window stretched weird, groping fingers across the face of the doomed man. He sat there—in the shadows.

"Youse'll find Mayme, dat's me wife, in de farderest back bert in de subway of Riley's Roost, at Tirteen River street." His voice was so low I strained forward to comprehend his words.

I took the missive, but did not then know its contents. I started to leave but at the door he called me back.

"Will youse lemme hav dat posie in yer coat, boss? I wants ter wrap it up an slip it ter Mayme as er goo-by! It's all I got ter sen de kid, an I'd kinder like her ter member me."

The following morn, after the sentence of the law had been executed, and The Weasel had paid the price, I set out to find Mayme. I descended the musty old stairway of Riley's Roost into the cellar hovels that served as "Home Sweet Home"—what a horrible travesty—for the dregs of River street. Filth, squalor and abject poverty were everywhere. At the back room I stopped and rapped. A moment passed, then a frowsy head was thrust out of the next door.

"Dey beat it," it said.

"Where?"

"Hell! Search me. De moll buzzed wit some flossy boy."

"Did you know him?"

"Sure ting I knowed 'im. It was De Rat—who don't know De Rat? He was er pal of de udder guy, de moll's hub—"De Weasel." Uster hang'er roun all de toime. But he forgetted part of his ear since den—somebody mus have bit it off."

"And the child?"

"In de Orphen's Home."

I went out and breathed deep of the pure air, and, standing on the curbstone, read the letter:

". . . . In de hall of de ranch wher I was pinched dey foun de top of er ear—like as if dat udder guy hit his dome up again sumting sharp when he was beatin it, an was too busy to stop fer jus an ear. . . . ."

When I had finished, I remembered the flower in my hand. I didn't throw it away; I took it to my office and have it there still, a little faded, perhaps, but wrapped up, just as he gave it to me.

* * *

A City of Disguises.

NEW YORK to its hordes of annual visitors is a city never fully understood. Too many persons arriving there from Eastport, Maine, Fort Worth, Texas, and like places, where things are somewhat as they seem to be, are almost angered when they find themselves unable to distinguish the "difference between folks," as they express it, upon first meeting.

For New York is the City of Disguises. The office boy hastens to the postoffice to mail the boss' letters, which carefully hides beneath a brief case that gives him the appearance of a young and struggling lawyer.

The shopgirl at Coney in the evening is quite a different creature from the one who handles women's lingerie behind the encounter for eight hours daily. When work is thru, and she is wearing the dress she saved so long to buy, from her hauteur (whatever that is) and the intonation of her voice she becomes for the time one of the royalty to the uninitiated.

And so the clerk of the men's clothing store may be easily mistaken, judging from his wrist watch, immaculate clothes and graceful manner for some one with more money in the bank.

Once the signs of wealth and station were more easily discernible. The old trade-marks are gone. Clothes, manner, carriage, accent or expressions have all become unstable as assurances of what lies within the man one meets on Broadway.

There was a day not so very long ago when the "ham" actor could always be discerned by the wary, no matter how he was clothed, but steam has put an end to the distinction. That was when casually one asked him the distance to Bridgeport, Conn.

"Three hours," would come back the answer without hesitation, for it took that long in those days. Or if it were Boston, "Six hours" would be the reply. He would never reckon distance except by the number of hours and minutes it required the dirty, uncomfortable coach of his experience to make the trip behind a puffing engine.

Then came the period when the same question and answer might have been exchanged with any of a growing number of trees, actors, railroad men or traveling salesmen. But now they all do it. Miles have disappeared as a unit of measure. Every one expresses it in hours, except in certain still comparatively unsettled portions of the Middle West. If you don't believe it try it on yourself.

How far is it to Chicago?

Sure, I know, twenty hours. How many miles? Gosh, I don't know. Wait until I figure it out.

* * *

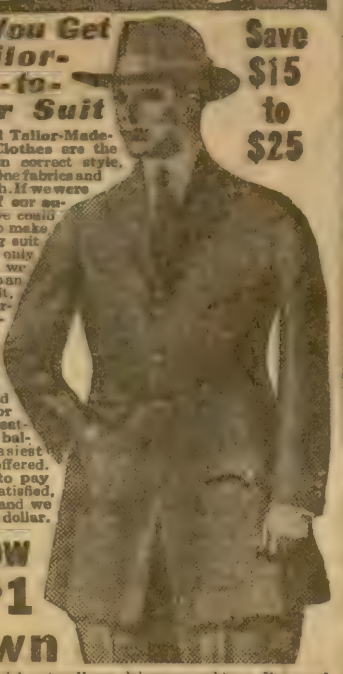
He Didn't Fall Far.

TINNER—Yesterday I fell off an eighteen-foot ladder.

Lady—Mercy! You might have killed yourself.

Tinner—Naw, it was only from the second step I dropped.

6 Months to Pay



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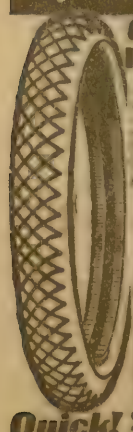

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Mr. Brisher's Treasure

By H. G. Wells

"YOU can't be too careful who you marry," said Mr. Brisher, and pulled thoughtfully with a fat-wristed hand at the lank mustache that hides his want of chin.

"That's why——" I ventured.

"Yes," said Mr. Brisher, with solemn light in his bleary, blue-gray eyes, moving his head expressively and breathing alcohol intimately at me. "There's lots as 'ave 'ad a try at me—many as I could name in this town—but none 'ave done it—none."

I surveyed the flushed countenance, the equatorial expansion, the masterly carelessness of his attire, and heaved a sigh to think that by reason of the unworthiness of women he must needs be the last of his race.

"I was a smart young chap when I was younger," said Mr. Brisher. "I 'ad my work cut out. But I was very careful—very. And I got thru . . ."

He leaned over the taproom table and thought visibly on the subject of my trustworthiness. I was relieved at last by his confidence.

"I was engaged once," he said at last, with a reminiscent eye on the shuva'penny board.

"So near at that?"

He looked at me. "So near as that. Fact is——" He looked about him, brought his face close to mine, lowered his voice, and fenced off an unsympathetic world with a grimy hand. "If she ain't dead or married to some one else or anything—I'm engaged still. Now." He confirmed this statement with nods and facial contortions. "Still," he said, ending the pantomime, and broke into a reckless smile at my surprise. "Me!

"Run away," he explained further, with coruscating eyebrows. "Come 'ome.

"That ain't all.

"You'd 'ardly believe it," he said, "but I found a treasure. Found a regular treasure."

I fancied this was irony, and did not, perhaps, greet it with proper surprise. "Yes," he said, "I found a treasure. And come 'ome. I tell you I could surprise you with things that has happened to me." And for some time he was content to repeat that he had found a treasure—and left it.

I made no vulgar clamor for a story, but I became attentive to Mr. Brisher's bodily needs, and presently I led him back to the deserted lady.

"She was a nice girl," he said—a little sadly, I thought. "And respectable."

He raised his eyebrows and tightened his mouth to express extreme respectability—beyond the likes of us elderly men.

"It was a long way from 'ere, Essex, if fact. Near Colchester. It was when I was up in London—in the buildin' trade. I was a smart young chap then, I can tell you. Slim. 'Ad best clo'es 's good as anybody. 'At—silk 'at, mind you." Mr. Brisher's hand shot above his head towards the infinite to indicate a silk hat of the highest. "Umbrella—nice umbrella with a 'orn 'andle. Savin's. Very careful I was——"

He was pensive for a little while, thinking, as we must all come to think sooner or later, of the vanished brightness of youth. But he refrained, as one may do in taprooms, from the obvious moral.

Silver Coins—Full!

"I got to know 'er thru a chap what was engaged to 'er sister. She was stoping in London for a bit with an aunt that 'ad a 'am an' beef shop. This aunt was very particular—they was all very particular people, all 'er people was—and wouldn't let 'er sister go out with this feller except 'er other sister, my girl that is, went with them. So 'e brought me into it, sort of to ease the crowding. We used to go walks in Battersea Park of a Sunday afternoon. Me in my topper, and 'im in 'is; and the girls—well—stylish. There was'nt many in Battersea Park 'ad the larf of us. She wasn't what you'd call pretty, but a nicer girl I never met. I liked 'er from the start, and, well—tho I say it who shouldn't—she liked me. You know 'ow it is, I dessay?"

I pretended I did.

"And when this chap married 'er sister—'im and me was great friends—what must 'e do but arst me down to Col-

(Continued on Page 19.)

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By a timely purchase we secured these classy Walking Shoes at a startling bargain price and have procured the selection of 20,000 pairs at a figure which makes this one of the greatest shoe bargains ever offered. Send only the coupon—no money until shoes arrive. Then if not satisfied, return them and back goes your money to you. But quick is the word. Stock will soon be sold out.

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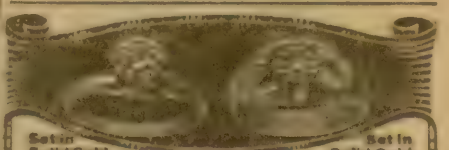

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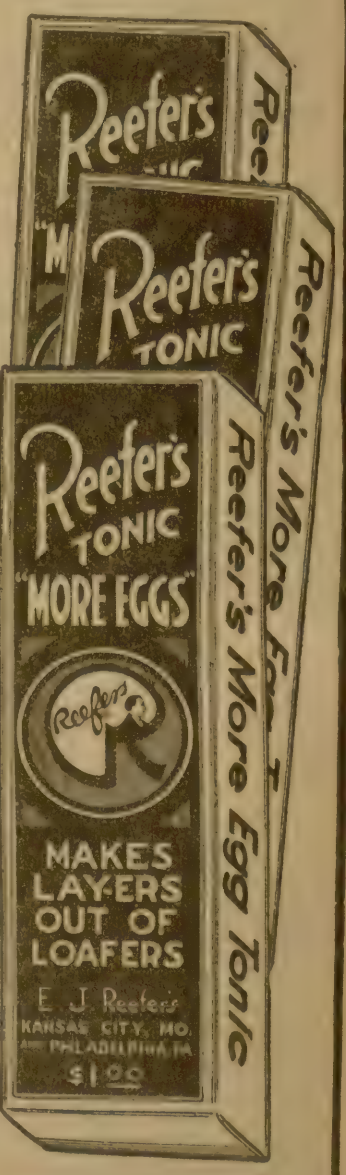

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A Prisoner of Propriety

By Willard E. Hawkins.

PROF. ASHLEY TREVORS, youngest member of the faculty of Windhaven College, stepped into a closed car at the side entrance of Science hall, where he had delivered his address on "Dual Personality and Its Relationship to the Subconciousness." He had allowed himself nineteen minutes in which to catch the train which would bear him away upon the initial stage of his honeymoon, and had stepped into a waiting automobile with the intention of dressing while being driven to the depot.

Five minutes after he had entered the car and drawn the curtains, Professor Trevors found himself being whirled rapidly down a paved highway in a direction opposite to the station, clad only in a silk shirt, knee-length summer underwear, shoes and socks, and a silk hat.

The Professor's first impulse was to make known his predicament to the chauffeur. That impulse was smothered in its infancy when he raised the curtain and gazed upon the slender feminine back of his driver.

With a gasp, Professor Trevors sank back into the cushioned seat of the car. His intellectual countenance registered acute dismay. He glanced down at his well-shaped, but scantily clad, limbs and shivered, altho the afternoon was warm to the point of sultriness.

It was a situation that called for action and rapid thinking, and Professor Trevors had always prided himself upon having a resourceful mind. But the effort to solve his present predicament resulted only in impressing him with his helplessness. He had not recovered from his paralysis of mind when the car swerved out of the main road and came to a stop. The door handle was turned.

Too late, Professor Trevors made a dive for it. Thru the narrow opening he caught sight of a flushed feminine face. A startled cry, and the door was slammed shut.

The face was that of a very young woman—young enough to have belonged to one of the Professor's college classes, and he had an indefinite impression that she did. Somewhere, he had seen those wide, questioning eyes. A serious, intent expression that went with the eyes now vaguely seemed to haunt him.

When she spoke, her voice betrayed a very natural alarm.

"Don't you dare come out!"

Professor Trevors had no intention of disobeying. He opened the door a bare half inch to facilitate conversation.

"My dear young lady," he began, "I can explain—that is, I cannot explain——"

"Put on your clothes and come out at once," she dictated.

"Very well," he responded meekly. It got him nowhere, but it postponed the ordeal of putting the awful truth in words.

"I can't understand it," the girl went on. "When you got in you were fully ——"

"I put them out of the window to my man," he explained miserably.

A moment of silence while she seemed to be reflecting upon this astonishing statement. "It was his idea," added Trevors. "You see, the train was due——"

"You need not explain," she interrupted with hauteur. "I do not consider it a subject that a gentleman should discuss with a lady."

Trevors flushed to the roots of his close-cropped hair. "What did you do with the suitcase?" he asked in an aggrieved tone. "It was to have been in the machine."

"Oh!" in a tone of enlightenment. "It—I told the driver of your car to go on to the station," she confessed. "Its number was 749."

"Then I insist that you drive there at once," demanded Trevors, in his most austere pedagogical tone.

After a moment's hesitation, she climbed into the driver's compartment. Not until she had started the car did it occur to him that she had not enlightened him as to her reason for kidnaping him. As he raised the curtain to bring up the subject, his eyes became riveted upon the number plate of a taxicab that was speeding past on the main road.

Instantly galvanized into activity, he rapped on the window.

But she, too, had seen it and turned into the main road in full pursuit of the vehicle. Regardless of traffic laws, they sped on. It would have been an easy matter to catch up with the other machine had the road been clear; but it was thronged with motorists and the taxi driver was clearly more skilled at making time under difficulties than the girl. Finally, a particularly annoying congestion delayed the pursuers so that they lost sight of the other car.

Trevors, peering forth anxiously from behind the curtains, had begun to despair of overtaking his precious suitcase and wearing apparel, when they came in sight of a little wayside store. A machine was parked before the building. It was—no!—yes!—it was taxicab number 749!

The girl made a sharp turn and drew up beside it. Both the driver's seat and passenger compartment were unoccupied.

"I don't know what I can do," she commented thru the tube. "There's no one to ask."

"Look inside," urged Trevors. "The suitcase must be there. Charles was to leave it so that I could change on the way to the train."

She alighted and, rather reluctantly, opened the taxicab door. From within she drew forth—the suitcase! Hastily shoving it into the driver's seat, she scrambled in beside it and started the car forward.

He tapped on the window.

"Thank you very much. And now if you will kindly let me have the suitcase——"

She appeared not to hear. He raised his voice and repeated the hint. Still she was oblivious.

It was beginning to dawn upon him that she did not intend to hear, when she turned from the main highway. Applying his eye to the window, he saw that the new road she had chosen was introduced by a signboard reading, "To Shady Rest."

Dim foreboding swept him. Shady Rest was a name surrounded, in his mind, by lurid associations. The ministers were wont to make periodical demands for the "cleaning up" of Shady Rest. He didn't want to go to Shady Rest, anyway. He wanted to go to Weymore and get married.

"PLEASE," he urged, in a despairing effort to pierce her obliviousness, "please give me my clothes!"

She condescended to respond.

"You may have them——" a pause—"on condition——"

"Yes!"

"That you promise not to carry thru this heinous crime."

"Heinous crime!" gasped Trevors. "My dear young lady—I—there has been some mistake. I contemplate no crime."

"Weren't you expecting to marry Elizabeth Larned?"

"Certainly—but there is nothing criminal in——"

"There is!" she retorted with feeling. "It is a tragic devastation of a woman's hopes—tho personally I cannot understand what any girl would see in Bud Summers."

"I—I don't follow you," confessed Trevors. "But, my dear child, I have no wicked intentions toward Miss Larned. I only expect to marry her."

"And you insist, in spite of my appeal to your better nature?"

"I—I suppose I do."

"Very well." She appeared to consider the subject closed.

"But my clothes!" he persisted.

"Will you promise not to leave the car?"

"My dear young lady!" He was trying hard to be patient. "That is just what I want them for."

"You can't have them," she asserted finally. "Not until it is too late for you to keep the appointment."

He fell back helplessly.

"Please," she added tensely, "please don't think I enjoy this. Cruel fate could not have imposed a more relentless task. But I must count my own feelings as naught when saving a friend from life-long misery. I, too, have known the blight of unrequited passion—not but what Elizabeth's case is different, because Bud it simply crazy about her."

As an explanation Trevors found this very unenlightening. She seemed to be talking about something with which he ought to be familiar but wasn't. Worst of all, time was passing.

Under the arrangement he had made with Miss Deborah Peyton, Elizabeth's aunt, the ceremony was to take place during a pause between trains at Weymore. He was to have joined them at Windhaven station, but even now, with good luck, he might make it by automobile.

Miss Peyton, by the way, was to have been the third member of the bridal party, and Trevors had anticipated several long, pleasant chats with her on scientific and literary subjects of mutual interest. He sighed at the inexplicable interference of this young person. And yet, at the same moment, he smiled. Drawing aside the curtain, he absently studied the alert tilt of her head. The setting sun had surrounded her with a halo, as it pierced the edges of her hair.

He lowered the window a discreet few inches.

"May I ask a question?" he called diffidently.

"You can't have them," she responded, "unless——"

"I'm not ready to promise anything," he interrupted. "What I want to ask is: Who are you?"

"And you don't even know that!" Her tone was tragic. "I'm Irene Madsen, Elizabeth's chum. No doubt you have heard her speak of me, little dreaming that—but I have vowed never to unburden the secret of my heart."

"Oh!" he responded vaguely.

"I attended your psychology classes last year," she added. "You never noticed me, of course——"

"Ah! but I did!" he exlaimed. This accounted for his impression on first seeing her. "So you are interested in psychology?" he added beaming.

"I adore it!"

"It has alway been to me a source of regret that my fiancee cares nothing for these deeper subjects," he confided. "I supposed all girls of immature age were alike in that respect."

"To me," she assured him, "frivolous pursuits count as nothing compared with intellectual attainments."

"This is most interesting," declared Trevors sincerely. He began to approve highly of his captor.

As the conversation progressed, he forgot the passage of time. He found himself expounding his pet theories. He could not recall when he had found so responsive an audience. Even Miss Peyton's homage had lacked something of the mysterious zest that accompanied this conversation. Perhaps it was the play of the girl's animated features in the twilight.

The twilight brought reminders.

"Miss Madsen," said Trevors seriously, "why did you prevent me from going to Weymore? I assure you that I intended no wrong to your friend."

They were entering hilly country. For a moment the girl made no reply. Reducing the speed of the machine, she drew a letter from her bodice and passed it ominously to him thru the window.

"I would have spared you the ghastly truth," she said in tragic accents; "but it is inevitable. Read that."

Doubtfully, he accepted the missive. The handwriting seemed familiar. Turning to the last page, he found his fiancee's name signed to it. The first words on the page caught his attention, and he read to the conclusion:

for next week I come to Weymore to meet my doom. Poor Bud—he can't understand that my sense of duty to Aunt Deborah forces me to go thru with this sacrilege. She has set her heart upon it. But oh, Irene, think of something—anything! Kidnap him, vamp him—I'm not particu-

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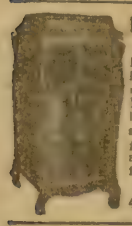

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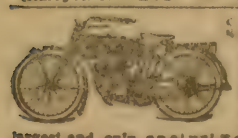

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lar what—only save

Yours in despair,
ELIZABETH LARNED.

IT WAS, as Miss Madsen had anticipated, a shock. Several moments elapsed before Professor Trevors again presented himself at the window.

"Don't you think," he questioned, a trifle severely, "that this was written in a spirit of frivolity? It would hardly seem——"

"Perhaps," she replied with candor, "Elizabeth did not really expect me to kidnap you. However, she little knew my true mettle."

"But suppose I had not suffered this mischance with my—er—clothes?"

"I had a plan," she assured him darkly. "Fortunately, fate played into my hands, and it was not necessary for me to fall back upon the last resort."

He consulted the letter.

"This document contains a term with which I am not familiar. What does she mean by 'vamp'?"

She glanced toward him appealingly, and the machine swerved.

"Please," she quavered, "please do not press me to tell. Are you sure it means nothing to you?"

"Perfectly sure. Why?"

"Because it was the plan I had in mind if driven to extremes."

"Oh!" gasped Trevors, while visions of poison vials and deadly weapons flashed thru his mind.

He lapsed into thoughtful silence.

"We seem to have reached some sort of a hotel," she observed presently, bringing the car to a stop in a grove of trees. "Since it is now too late for you to keep your appointment, I will let you have your—your suitcase. You can get it while I see about something to eat."

Trevors brightened. But his relief changed to dismay when, on peering forth, he saw an illuminated sign that read, "Shady Rest Inn."

All the sinister impressions connected with the name again leaped into vividness. "Don't go in there—not alone!" he called in alarm, as she started toward the entrance; but she paid no heed.

Haste was demanded if he would follow and protect her from the terrors he vaguely suspected of lurking within. He lowered the window and dragged the suitcase from the driver's compartment. Switching on the interior light, he unstrapped the leather case. A garment that he failed to recognize lay on top. It was soft and filmy to the touch. He drew it forth—a gay-figured crimson kimono.

A startled survey of the articles exposed to view beneath it revealed nothing that remotely resembled male attire. Laces, satins, sheer silk stockings, toilet articles—in his agitation, he tumbled them out ruthlessly upon the seat. It was the wrong suitcase!

Worse than that, it was a purloined suitcase.

At the sound of another car approaching, he hastily switched off the light and composed himself miserably to await Miss Madsen's return. The new arrival rolled to a stop a short distance further on, and several persons alighted. After a short conference, the ladies apparently went toward the hotel entrance, while the men remained behind, talking in low, excited tones. One of them approached the machine in which Professor Trevors sat, registering profound discouragement.

"She's it, sure as you're alive!" came the excited exclamation.

Something seemed to tell Trevors that retribution had come upon him for the filching of the suitcase. A wave of unhappiness swept over him.

In a moment he would be revealed in all his unconventional scantiness of attire. Instinctively seeking cover, with the only materials at hand, he drew over his nether limbs a green satin garment that bore a certain frilly resemblance to a pair of pajamas.

It reached halfway between his knees and his ankles. For further camouflage he donned the silk kimono. It was a tight fit across his broad shoulders, but he made it. Doubtless he would have continued to array himself in the contents of the suitcase had he not heard a stifled scream.

"Caught the girl herself!" came a triumphant voice. "She's the trick I saw doing the job, when I looked out of the window."

Trevors was not conscious how he got there, but he found himself in the roadway, bearing down upon a heavy-set, young man in chauffeur's uniform, who was holding Miss Madsen by the arm as he forced a flashlight into her face.

"Take your hands off that girl!" shouted Trevors savagely.

The flashlight dazzled him for an instant. He knocked it from the other man's grasp. They went down together, exchanging blow for blow, struggling and kicking. The sound of cries and running feet accompanied their fall.

It was Trevor's first physical battle, but he was equipped for it with an access of indignation that gave his muscles unwonted strength. His antagonist slipped from his grasp, and he struggled to his feet to find himself confronted by half a dozen where there had been but one. Undaunted, he rushed to renew the attack. A solar plexus blow doubled up the nearest of the half-dozen. The others closed upon him, receiving indiscriminate buffeting from a pair of arms that seemed endowed with the power and motion of a windmill. A heavyweight landed upon his back as he grappled with two assailants, and all went down together in a seething heap.

Trevors—gasping for breath—found himself pinned beneath the weight of numbers.

"Disarm him," came a terse command from the mass of beef and bone that occupied the region of his thorax. "He's a desperate character—we can't take no chances."

While Trevors strained to escape, exploring hands were passed over his body.

"I can't disarm him," came the querulous response. "He's wearing some kind of things—he ain't got no pockets."

"Take him inside, then. We'll hold him there while I put in a call for headquarters. Don't let the girl get away."

Five minutes later, under the firm guidance of two officers and several small boys and men who had joined the first reinforcements, Trevors was led toward the hotel entrance. His captors elbowed thru a short hallway filled with excited spectators, and propelled him up the stairs. With Miss Madsen, he was pushed thru a doorway on the first landing and the key was turned in the lock.

Professor Trevors glanced down apprehensively at his silk-clad person. The gala attire was not enhanced in appearance by the rips and stains that had resulted from his encounter—but he was at least under cover.

"I'm very sorry——" he began humbly.

"Don't apologize," interrupted Miss Madsen. Her face was glowing with excitement. "You were wonderful—splendid! But we haven't a moment to waste." She made a quick survey of the room. "There's only a skylight here, but perhaps the bedroom has a window."

THEIR prison apparently was a reception parlor with a sleeping-room separated from it by a curtained archway. Thevors followed as she brushed aside the curtain and hurried to the window.

"It doesn't look very hopeful for escape," she announced. "There's nothing but a central court here, with walls on all sides."

"But why escape?" demanded Trevors. "When we explain——"

"We can't explain!" she responded half-hysterically. "Don't ask me why, but we must think of a way out. Help me think!"

In vague alarm, Trevors recalled the notorious character of the place. What if he should be seen and recognized—in that garb?

He sank weakly upon a divan.

Suddenly the girl turned toward him with a gesture of appeal.

"Do you still insist upon marrying Elizabeth?" she demanded.

"Not if she wishes to be released. If her aunt should request me to withdraw my——"

"But she won't," said Miss Madsen with conviction. "She has set her heart on this marriage, regardless of torn heartstrings. That leaves me with but one alternative."

A creepy feeling assailed Professor Trevors at the intentness of her gaze. Slowly, she drew near. Two spots of color in her cheeks deepened. She seemed to have intentions that he could not fathom.

She opened her lips as if to speak—then, suddenly and without warning, threw herself down on the divan beside him and buried her face in a pillow.

"I can't do it! I can't do it!" she moaned. "I thought I was equal to it, but I can't! I can't!"

It was the most astonishing of many astonishing things that had happened to Trevors that day.

A wave of tenderness surged over him. He patted her shoulder gently. "Don't," he protested. "Whatever it is, I am sure it will all come out right."

His arm encircled her and he drew her gently toward him. The act was wholly involuntary.

"You're so good!" she sobbed. "But you don't know—you don't know what I meant to do. I was going—I was going to vamp you—to save Elizabeth."

That ominous word again—with all its sinister suggestions. Involuntarily he straightened up. She drew away.

"No! No!" he whispered hoarsely, while his arms tightened around her

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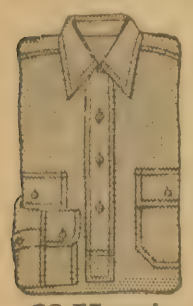

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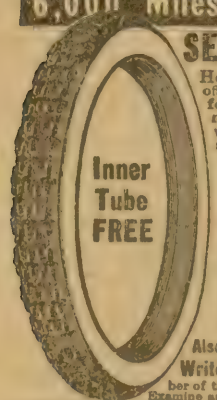

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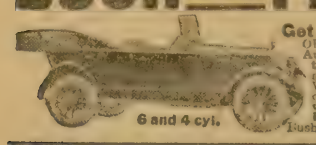

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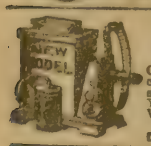

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slender figure. "Whatever crime you contemplated, you are too fine—too wonderful—to carry it thru!!"

Then, as she raised her tear-stained face, he bent down and crushed his lips to hers.

"So!"

Like a bolt of lightning, from the curtained archway, came the interruption.

Trevors looked up. In his eyes was a dazed expression. The girl struggled to free herself.

"So!" the syllable was repeated. Miss Deborah Peyton, erstwhile admirer of Windhaven's youngest professor, stood in the archway, a picture of outraged virtue, while within the protection of her arm was Elizabeth Larned—her gaze fixed in horror upon the scene. Behind them were two grinning officers, a swagger young man, and the chauffeur with whom Trevors had first grappled.

"I would not have believed it!" announced Miss Peyton sternly. "I could not believe it if I did not see it with my own eyes." Her lips were set in a firm line as she turned to her niece. "I am indeed glad that I insisted upon alighting from the train and looking up to this—this disgustnig roue!"

The chauffeur edged forward.

"I spotted him for a bad one the minute he——"

"Be silent, sir!" commanded Miss Peyton. "This is a family affair." She swept her companions with a glance that ignored the abashed chauffeur. "Mr. Summers, will you lead me away from this shameless sight?"

"With pleasure, auntie." The swagger young man solicitously took her arm. Elizabeth hung back. She was staring in unbelief at her chum.

"Irene!" she gasped. "And I thought I could trust you!"

Wilting before this new attack, Miss Madsen made but weak defense.

"But—but you have Bud—and you told me——"

"It makes no difference who I have!" Elizabeth's indignation was superb. "The fact remains that you are deliberately vamping my intended husband. Don't ever speak to me again!" With head erect, she turned to follow her aunt.

"Wait a minute," called one of the officers. "You was going to identify this here kimono and things."

She paused. "Let him have them—he's welcome—false creature!"

The officer scratched his head. "Well, if there ain't no one going to prefer charges against you," he commented to the two on the divan, "I ain't going to make a fool of myself by holding you no longer."

The chauffeur alone lingered.

"If you're the bird that belongs to that other suitcase," he observed cheerfully, "I left it at the station check stand when I picked up this bunch. Some terror, ain't she?" He jerked his head significantly toward the departing Aunt Deborah. "So long."

Irene buried her face in her hands.

"It's always the way," she moaned. "Whenever I try to help, the object of my sacrifice shows nothing but base ingratitude."

Trevors allowed his arm to creep around her. It seemed the natural thing to do.

"And worst of all," she continued, "I've bared my bleeding heart to you—when I intended to suffer in mute secrecy."

"Don't—Miss Madsen—don't!" he protested tenderly.

"All I can do now—in reparation"—she sobbed—"is to take you home to your c-c-c-clothes. Perhaps if you never see me again you can forget this—this awful experience."

"Never see you again!"

'Not unless you w-w-w-wish to," she said, looking up with trembling lips and tear-stained cheeks.

"But I do!" he blurted. "I wish——" He broke off suddenly, and a riot of crimson, rivaling the hue of the kimono, spread over his face.

"I—I—I seem to have discovered the use of a new word," he said haltingly. "If you—I wonder—would you mind——"

"Yes——" she encouraged breathlessly.

"——if I asked you to vamp me again?" he finished, suddenly gathering her in his arms.

A Case for Diplomacy

(Concluded From Page 5)

quite sure that your niece——"

"Oh, she will be delightful," said the lawyer. "It's settled, then."

A MONTH later the golden-haired lady again sat in the lawyer's office. This time her self-possession seemed to have deserted her. She shook from time to time with a convulsive shudder, and her eyes were red with weeping, and her face streaked in an unseemly manner with the rouge that was also on the tightly wadded ball of a wet handkerchief clinched in her hand. The lawyer was pale and his hand trembled and shook the open newspaper that he held.

"Tell me, how did you do it?" he demanded, in a husky voice. "Did you write?"

"I wrote," she replied, brokenly, "but he got over to the hotel before I had a chance to get away. He begged and pleaded and told me that if I threw him over his life would be ruined, but I laughed at him and asked him if the girl he jilted for me did not have her life ruined. I had thought of that girl all along when I felt my courage going—and now I shall have him to think of forever. Oh, if I had dreamed of this!"

The lawyer groaned.

"His father?" she faltered.

"He will not surive his dead son long," said the lawyer, and the lady with the golden hair pulled her veil over her face and rose to go.

"It's a terrible thing," said the lawyer, "but we acted for the best and"—he held out a crisp slip of pink paper—"this is yours," he said awkwardly. "You must take it. It was not your fault; it was mine."

The lady with the golden hair took the check, tore it across and let it flutter to the floor. The next moment she was gone and the lawyer was staring stupidly at the panels of the closed door. He threw the newspaper aside with a curse and thrust his hands deep in his pockets, while his chin dropped on his breast.

Young Frapperty's First Call

THE young man was making his first call there. He had met her but once, but this call of his was at her seemingly earnest invitation. The young man pressed the button at the portal. So still was the home that he could hear the bell ringing within. He heard the patter of feet and the door opened.

"Oh, ah—Mr. Frapperty, how do you do?" exclaimed the young woman, as if she were receiving the surprise of her life at having a caller she had invited and no doubt expected. "Won't you come right in?"

The young man went thru the conventional formula for the occasion and stepped within.

A minute later the young man found himself in the living-room, sitting in a chair that had been pointed out to him as very comfortable. It was then that he made a bloodcurdling discovery—he had removed from his feet only one of his rubbers. He felt both embarrassed and shocked. But he could not be blamed. This was his first visit and he had taken off hat, coat, muffler, cane and the other rubber in a strange and dimly lighted reception hall.

"I suppose, Mr. Frapperty, that you have recovered from the dance Wednesday evening?" began the young woman.

"Delightful time, wasn't it?" replied the young man, crossing his legs so that the unrubbered shoe would be uppermost. "I'm so glad I met you."

The young lady reached for a program of the dance, which gave the young man a chance to shift positions. He tried to shove his rubbered foot under the chair in which he was framed, but alas! his feet were large for his age and he was foiled.

"Do you know any of the boys on the reception committee?" naively pursued the young woman, glancing at the program.

"Yes, of course, certainly."

"Marvin Swink is engaged to Eileen Gribbens, who introduced us," added the young woman.

"Well, I declare!" said the young man.

The doorbell rang, the young woman excused herself and swished her silken self out of the room to open it. She had gone but a second when the young man, seeing his opportunity, reached madly for his rubbered foot and removed the cause of his worry—jamming it into his breast pocket.

The young woman ushered her male parent into the room and the young man was properly introduced. A short time later he departed into the inky night.

"You didn't treat Mr. Frapperty very cordially, daddy," said the young woman. "Suspicious character!" responded the parent. "As I entered the room I saw him trying to stuff some large object into his breast pocket. I wonder whether it was some of our bric-a-brac?"

"It was his rubber," cried the young lady in glee. "He forgot to remove that one coming in and forgot to put the other one on going out. What an embarrassed goose a young man can make of himself when he calls on a girl for the first time!"

"Oh, his rubber! I see," said her father. "In that case I owe the young man a thousand pardons for my suspicions. "I know from experience exactly how he felt. Besides, his action indicates that he is a young man of resources and originality. All he needs is a little more speed."

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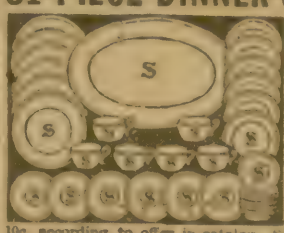

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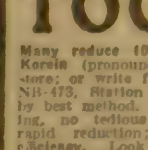

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Carrie Gunster's Slave

(Continued From Page 6)

my hundred come in? I think I've earned it already."

"You'll get it."

"Just pass it thru, Mr. Kissilman, and I'll let you deliver your note in person."

"Why, I haven't that amount with me. I——"

"Sh! What's that?"

Connie listened.

"Footsteps, by golly!"

"I can hear nothing," said Connie.

"Well, that ain't sayin' I can't. That nigger's snoopin' about. I'm beatin' it. Let you know later what happens, if I can."

"But you can't get that hundred dollars without a note from me."

"Oh, I'll trust you. We can fix that up later."

"Hedderly ran stealthily from the window, stooping low.

"Leave me the file," Connie risked calling after him.

But he kept on and vanished in the trees.

Connie listened for fifteen minutes, but no sound came save the soughing of the wind in the forest.

CHAPTER V.

THREE afternoons later Carrie relieved her father of guarding the prisoner in the millet field at half past 2. The millet was all down now; Connie was raking it with an old-fashioned handtool with oaken teeth.

"You must make hay while the sun shines," she said merrily, riding up to him.

He was at once aware of a great change in her tone and manner. In her brown eyes, when he glanced up quickly, he saw the dancing fires of youth and health, and the reflection of a mind free from worry. Eagerly his eyes devoured her. Only friendliness looked back at him. He wondered, his fingers trembling slightly on the handle of the rake, but asked no question as to what might have wrought the change. He was too happy just to realize it, without questioning the cause. That moment, as he hungrily viewed her sturdy girlish figure, he knew that some day he must win her for his own or know no more content in life.

He had but to look at the sky to realize her reference to making hay in sunny weather. Clouds were rolling up in the west, white and fleecy, but being reinforced by black ones.

"Storm coming?" he asked.

"No doubt of it," she replied.

"A mountain thunder-shower, I suppose."

"No—it's perhaps too late for that. Old Father Winter is recruiting his forces."

"So early? What are the winters like up here?"

"Sometimes winter comes in October or early in November; then, again, we will have no snow until 'way after Christmas. But I am convinced that our farming is over for the year. It's time for the clean-up. The gophers are burrowing far back from the lake. The squirrels are harvesting the nuts of the pinons before they are half out of the cones. Haven't you noticed the coats of the burros and horses growing heavier every day? They're so heavy now they're uncomfortable wearing them working. Nature has scheduled an early and a hard winter, and has warned and clothed her children accordingly."

"Say," he said, "you're wonderful."

She looked at him steadily. His eyes held hers for a time, then her heretofore steadfast complacency left her. Her eyes grew suddenly brighter, with a glistening as of a moisture film. For the first time since he had met her, her face changed color. Then the long lashes covered her discomfiture.

Two swift steps brought him to her stirrup. His mouth was suddenly dry as paper. His head was hot, but a cold sickness shook him. She had made no move. He raised a hand and laid it on hers, across the saddle horn.

"Carrie Gunster," he said huskily, "I have heard of prisoners becoming so content in their confinement that, when released, they refused to take their liberty, and, sometimes, they wandered back deliberately. You have made me your prisoner, and I want to be such for life."

She flashed one glance at him, then looked away toward the gathering clouds, but her hand kept steady under his.

"Winter is coming," she said. "That millet must be cured and stored away as soon as possible."

He tightened his grip on her hand.

"Carrie," he said, "tell me that you trust me—that you have all along—that you do not think me the heartless, grasping millionaire your brooding father has painted for you. Tell me that."

"How—how could I think that, Mr. Kissilman?"

"Then why have you helped your father to—— But what does all that matter? Tell me that you love me, Carrie."

Her hand trembled. "Why do you tell me to say that?"

"Why? Why? Why, because I would rather hear it than anything else in the English language. Because I love you."

She sucked in her breath. Her face went suddenly white. She grasped his shoulders with both hands, leaned over and placed her now flaming face about three inches from his.

"Say that again!" she cried harshly. "And tell the truth or I'll kill you!"

Unflinchingly his eyes looked into hers. His brain reeled, but a soothing happiness made him unafraid of any threat.

"I love you," he said, "better than anything else in life."

For a long time her eyes held his, fiercely, searching his soul. At last: "And I have loved you, Connie Kissilman, since that night you entered our cabin. You are free. Take my gun, Connie, and go. I will tell father you overpowered me."

"Which I have," he cried triumphantly, and strove to throw both arms about her.

"Not yet," she cried, and lifted her horse in a swift spring, which freed her from him.

"Then I refuse to go," he said. "My vacation has only just begun. And when I do go, I refuse to go alone."

"Winter is close," she said, and smilingly cast her glance toward the heavens.

He picked up the rake, a great joy in his heart, his tumbling thoughts delving into a mysteriously happy future.

Obscured by lowering clouds, the sun went down; the dark day was merged into the blackness of night. The wind rose to a gale, and the millions of pines sang boisterously.

Connie hung an extra blanket over his cell window as he crept into bed that night, and later wished he had it over him. A gust blew it down, awaking him, when he had slept an hour or so. As he hurried to replace it, he felt snowflakes driving against his face. The window ledge, he found, or the top of the log where a ledge should have been, was piled eight inches high with the cold, white crystals.

"Our millet is gone," was his only thought as he put on all his clothes as an addition to the warmth of his bedding.

He was asleep again almost instantly. How long he slept this time, he did not know. He was suddenly brought wide awake by a light flashing in his eyes.

He blinked away the sting of the radiance and strove to rise. The girl stood over him, her face ghastly white, her shoulders laden with snow. A weird, sinister smile twitched her lips. There was a look in her eyes not good to see. Slowly Connie realized that the black muzzle of her big six-shooter threatened him from behind the lantern in her hand.

"Are you dressed?" Her voice was cold, hard, relentless.

"Yes. What——"

"Get up!"

He obeyed her.

"March out of the door, turn to your right around the cabin, and strike up the canyon at a run. And do it now."

"Carrie, what on earth——"

"Do it now!"

THERE was no mistaking the antagonism in her tone and manner. Connie instinctively knew that what had happened to change her attitude toward him, and what was now to happen, were matters he might not discuss. He felt that, girl tho she was, she knew her power; that she could and would use her gun to further any ends she had in view.

"You're a hard and whimsical taskmaster," he said, and stepped thru the door.

As he left the shelter of the cabin, turning up the canyon, her clear voice came to him thru the storm:

"Keep to the canyon. Run!"

He saw lights shining from the windows of the big log house where Carrie and her father lived, as he obeyed the command. Suddenly a door burst open. In the shaft of light that streamed out across the glistening snow, he saw several men plunge forth, pell mell. Shouts and calls came weirdly thru the tempest.

Something hard gouged him in the back. "Run faster!" came the stern command.

Then came a long-drawn sound, mel-

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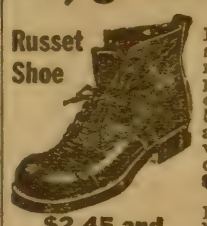

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low, bell-like, trailing away on the wings of the wind into a ghostly scream.

For a little Connie was nonplussed as he plowed thru the foot-deep snow up the zigzag canyon. Then it came once more, and there was added to it a sharper, more clamorous wail which made it the more uncanny still.

"Hounds!" he gasped.

"Yes, hounds, Mr. Kissilman. But don't give your hopes much rein. The snow is falling steadily on our tracks and the Sheriff's hounds will be useless as poodle dogs. You can run faster. Try it!"

And again the muzzle of her Colt was pressed to his loins.

For ten minutes he plunged on blindly, wallowing thru drifts, fighting thru overhanging branches, tripping over snow-covered stones. Then resentfully he shouted back at Carrie:

"There's a terrible misunderstanding. I know nothing of the Sheriff or his hounds. Won't you allow me to——"

"I'll allow you nothing, now. There has been a terrible misunderstanding—there has indeed. You're almost out of the canyon. Turn left when you leave it. Run faster. By the way—do you hear the hounds?"

And this was followed by a harsh laugh, which stung him to the heart.

When Connie left the canyon, he found himself on a rounded, windswept mountain top, covered with sagebrush and low pinons, shoulder high. The going was easier for a time, for the wind swept the snow away as it fell and sent it off in a wild, abandoned dance, which was checked in more heavily timbered sections. Soon, however, they were going down hill again, and in a little they entered a forest of gigantic pines.

"You may walk," came the voice from behind him.

He came to a dead halt, turned swiftly and thrust out both arms. The white of the snow made light, despite the blackness of the sky and of the forest of thrashing trees.

"Carrie," he cried, "explain this to me. You give me no chance to——"

She took one step and leveled her weapon at his breast.

"Why are you so dense?" she said. "Understand right now that you are as near death as you were the night you faced father across the table. Can't you understand that I'm no high school girl from the city? I'm blood and bone of these mountains, where people are a law unto themselves. I've carried this gun for years, in a constant war against men who would never think of shooting such a specimen as you are, but would spank you, if you crossed them, and go about their manly enterprises. Do you think I won't shoot? Face me just a little longer and you'll know the truth."

The hot blood swept to his head, then suddenly he grew cool. He remembered that he had set his heart to see this adventure thru, and to win this girl. But he knew himself to be no coward; and he hung between the desire to show her this by defying her and by hurrying on, and seeing the adventure thru.

"You have me covered," he said. "Were you a man, this in itself would be cowardly, for I am unarmed. I suppose a woman, tho, has a right to this advantage. I'll go on and see it to the end. But I want you to understand that I am doing this because it's you."

"You are wise to go on," she told him.

Hours later, staggering thru the blinding snow, they came upon a little cabin in the woods. The girl ordered him inside and made him light a candle, which she thrust into his hand.

The cabin was furnished mountaineer fashion. There was a table, a bed, a few straight-backed chairs, a cook stove and a wealth of stored provisions. She ordered him to make a fire in the stove.

When the fire was blazing and a slow warmth filling the little cabin, she motioned him to a seat by the fireside and took one opposite, her eyes always on him, her revolver in her lap.

"You are now in the Fawnskin country," she said in a matter-of-fact tone. No campers can come here. I know the man who owns this cabin—a prospector. He's down below now and won't be back until spring. I'll leave pay for what stores we use, and he'll never know who used them. Don't rely on the hope that I'm to guard you alone, Mr. Kissilman. Tovit will be here in the morning. He's out in this storm, poor nigger! When your rescue party has left the valley, we will return, and from now on you will be a slave in all that the term implies.

"As usual," he said lightly, "I can't get it straight. This afternoon you and I came pretty close to reaching an understanding. Now——"

"Did we? Well, we have reached one, now."

"If you'll only explain," he pleaded.

She sat silent a minute, her deep eyes thoughtful.

"You thought this all a farce. My father would have killed you that night, but for me. I thought I read honesty in you and I wanted you—saved you for myself. I have kept you prisoner for myself, for I wanted you here to test you out and to know you better as the days went on."

"WHY did you allow your father to dupe me into placing myself in his power, Carrie?"

"I knew nothing of his wild plan until I saw you following Tovit and the burros down the trail the night you came. Then father told me as he waited for you. But it was too late to interrupt proceedings.

"I knew the workings of father's poor, half-deranged mind. He acts altogether on impulse—inspiration, as he calls it. I knew that if, at the critical moment, when he was all worked up by the intensity of the situation, I could flash another idea into his mind with the swiftness of an electric spark, I could save you. And you know the result.

"I meant to free you in a night or two, but was afraid to do so until I had learned you better—learned your nature—found out whether you were of a vengeful disposition, would institute proceedings against father. Then I kept you because I wanted to learn you for another reason. I wanted to know that you were what I believed and wanted you to be. Your car was not pushed over a precipice into a mountain lake. It is safely hidden in the forest. Tovit and I dragged it there with the burros.

"Well, I have learned you," she went on. "And now everything is changed. It's just as poor father thinks it has been all along. Your father's blood is strong in you, and you meant to beat us all along. But you won't. I was almost deceived by you. This afternoon I would have foolishly allowed you to go. I'm glad I didn't. I know you now."

"Keep on," he urged. "Perhaps you'll make an explanation unawares."

"Of course, there are some things you don't know," she said, uncoiling her glorious wet hair and allowing it to fall tantalizingly to the floor behind her. "You will, perhaps, not press me for what you call an explanation after I tell you that I read note number one in the bunch of turnips."

"You read my message to Gray?"

"Certainly. Did you think I was so dense as to not notice the opportunity our vegetable business gave you for communicating with the world outside? I searched every bunch of stuff before Tovit took it to the camp. I found your note and read it."

"And you allowed it to go?"

"I did. There was nothing in it that could at once harm us. Then I stole to the sugar pine one night and read the note hidden there."

"When?"

"The night Gus Hedderly called on you."

"Then it wasn't there? He was sure that it wasn't."

"He told the truth. I took it away to read it, after his first visit to the sugar pine. I didn't expect him back so soon. But I saw him return, search for it, and go away disappointed. Then I hurriedly replaced it. But I didn't know the man was Hedderly. I thought it was the man Gray whom you had directed to search for the note. Had I known you had taken Hedderly into your confidence——

"Well, your note deceived me. It made me believe that your imprisonment was not irksome—that you wished to stay and learn me better, as I was trying to

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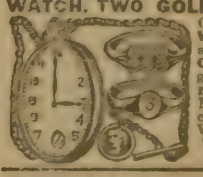

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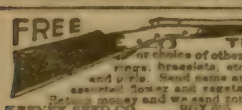

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learn you. The note caused me to believe that you meant us no harm and that, when once you were free, you would make ample restitution to father. So I meant to allow your man to come and rescue you, as planned. Then I—I hoped you would pay father and——"

He rose impulsively.

"Carrie!" he cried, but the big gun ordered him to his seat again.

"I did not know until tonight," she continued, "that it was Hedderly whom you had taken into your confidence. He made you change your mind about us, I suppose, and persuaded you to let him go in person and explain everything to your secretary. And tonight he came, with all his cowmen, and the sheriff, and the county hounds. But I was too quick for them, and spirited you away. They'll never get you, now."

"Look here," he said, "I begin to suspect that Hedderly had an ax to grind. That he doubted even me. Now I understand his peculiar manner. At the time I thought he was trying to take advantage of my situation to get a wad of money from me. Now, what else could he have had in mind?"

"Getting us into trouble, of course," she said witheringly. "For ten years the H-H outfit has tried to run us off our land. That grass about the lake would pasture six or seven hundred cattle for five months every year. They used it before we squatted there and considered it as good as theirs. But we fought them off, and they've never been able to uproot us.

"Now, with father under such a grave charge as you could bring against him, they could get rid of us for good, and at the same time satisfy a ten-year craving for revenge."

"I see—I see," mused Connie.

"You're pretending that Hedderly didn't make all this clear?"—scornfully.

"He did not even hint at it," said Connie. "He intimated, tho, that he considered me in a desperate situation; but I refused to listen to him. He got the note by accident. The turnips containing it went to the store, instead of to some camper, and he chanced to buy them. But when he left my prison window, I understood that he was to receive a hundred dollars from me for merely taking my first note to Gray."

Her brown eyes looked him thru and thru.

"I wish I could believe you," she said. "It's strange that you should pick on our enemy to carry your message."

"But I didn't pick him," he protested. "Chance forced him upon me. Think it over. Can't you trust me still?"

She was silent for a long time. Then—"Just what would you do if you were to gain your freedom?"

"I will promise nothing," he said firmly. "But if you were to give me my freedom of your own free will, expecting nothing from me, or if I have to gain it in spite of you, your father will probably not be disappointed. Then"—he looked her straight in the eye—"I think I'd come back here for you."

Her eyes searched him thru and thru.

"I might believe you," she said, "but for Hedderly."

"But I tell you, Carrie——"

"No more tonight, please."

SILENTLY, for hours now, they sat, one on either side of the glowing stove. Now and then he replenished the fire. Outside the blizzard howled. At last he fell sound asleep in his chair.

It was high daylight when he awoke. The storm had passed. Bright sunlight streamed in over a world of snow and whitened sills. The fire had gone out. Connie was chilled to the bone.

He cast one glance at Carrie, then chuckled. She was sound asleep in her chair, worn out from sheer fatigue and the excitement of the night. The Colts was on the point of sliding from her lap, her sun-golden hair trailed behind her on the floor.

Softly he rose, tiptoed to her, and took the monstrous weapon from her lap. Then back in his chair he took out his check book and wrote:

Pay to the order of Whittlesay Gunster, $50,000.00.

CONRAD KISSILMAN.

He rose once more, tiptoed softly to her and tucked the check into the bosom of her flannel waist. Then he extracted the cartridges from the Colts and laid it back in her lap.

He had just resumed his seat, and was on the verge of making some noise which would arouse her, at the same time pretending to be waking himself, when from the distance, thru the frosty air, came the long-drawn, mellow baying of a hound.

In the same instant the door burst open and in staggered Tovit.

Carrie sprang nimbly to her feet, her empty weapon grasped firmly in her hand.

"My Gawd, Missy!" groaned the negro. "Dey done fooled dis nigger. Dat Hedderly he done it. All night long I snooped about in de storm and watched 'em in de cabin. Dey're snowed in and can't leave wid ole Marse Whittlesay. Ah sure did aim to staht out to come to you, lak you tole me. But dis dibbil Hedderly he spect I sneakin' about, and he got on my trail. Den he got de Sheriff, Ah speck, an' de dawgs. An' dem houn's can trail a nigger now, sence the snow stop fallin'. An——"

He rushed, wild-eyed, to the door and slammed it in the face of a great tan bloodhound, which had suddenly appeared racing toward the cabin.

"Dey got us now, Missy. What'll we do?"

"Barricade the door!" she cried, and turned to Connie. "Get in the corner!"

He immediately obeyed.

Tovit piled firewood before the door and window, while the hounds bayed excitedly outside.

"Dey're way behind de dawgs, lakly," he puffed. "Dey can't trail in dis country lak Tovit."

"You guard the prisoner, Tovit," ordered the girl. "I'll stand them off as long as possible."

"Just a minute," said Connie easily, as the big negro came toward him. Before there's any shooting begun, look into the cylinder of your revolver, Carrie."

She did so, blushed fiery red and cast a strange, appealing, half-comprehending glance at Connie.

"You fell asleep," he said, "and I had the chance to rescue myself. I took your revolver and extracted the cartridges. Here they are," and he tossed them on the table.

"So, as I was in complete command of the situation," he went on, "had gained my liberty on my own efforts, and had not been forced into any cowardly surrender, I forthwith made amends for the wrong done your father by mine. I said I would, if you gave me a chance, all along. Look in the bosom of your waist."

Slowly, grippingly, she thrust in a hand, withdrew the check, and glanced back to him, her face afire, her eyes moist and glistening. Then, thrusting Tovit aside, Connie stalked to her, placed both arms about her and kissed her lips.

She stood there, trembling, her hands at her sides, and made no move to stop him as he tore down Tovit's barricade and threw up a window.

"What's all this?" he challenged sharply, as a group of men came hurrying in sight.

Gray's voice answered him.

"That you, Connie? My Lord, man——"

"Gray," said Connie, "I'm astonished at you. Didn't you receive my notes intimating that all was well and that I wanted no interference?"

"I received no note from you," said Gray. "This man, Hedderly, came to me and said you were a prisoner, that your life was in danger, that——"

"Yes, yes—I know about what Hedderly told you. I've just learned it. Mr. Hedderly, step over here."

Hedderly came forward thru the snow, his eyes lowered, his face sullen.

"Do you know what I'm going to do with you, Hedderly?" asked Connie sternly. "I'm going to bring court charges against you for slander. We'll all see that you, at least, pay the Sheriff's expenses on this wild-goose chase you have instituted. Mr. Gray, come here."

Gray came to the window.

"I want you and the sheriff and all of you—including the negro in here—to go back and leave me entirely alone. I'll explain everything to the satisfaction of you and the sheriff later. The rest don't need to know. I wish to be allowed to conduct my affairs as suits me best, Gray. And all my affairs, now and henceforth will center about what you will see when I step away from the window."

There stood Carrie Gunster, her reddish hair hanging to her knees, her moist eyes fixed on Connie. Connie stepped to her and took her hand.

"Perhaps you understand, Mr. Gray?"

Gray lifted his hat and a smile relieved the puzzlement on his face.

"Yes, I think I understand, now," he said.

The End.

A Trying Ordeal.

WITH a wail of distress she threw the horrible thing from her. It was too much—too much.

Her recently acquired husband heard her sobs and rushed into the kitchen.

"What is it?" he asked tenderly, as he put his arms around her.

"I can't do it!" she cried. "I can't do it!"

"What?"

"Get that chicken apart," and she pointed to a fowl which lay on the table.

A light of stern resolve shone in the man's eyes as he rolled up his sleeves.

"I'll do it!" he said. "I've never tackled one before, but it seems to me that if I can take a motor car to pieces I shouldn't be beaten by a mere hen, and anyway, I won't have to put it together again."

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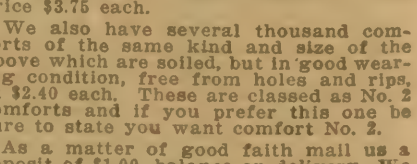

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Mr. Brisher's Treasure

(Continued From Page 11.)

chester, close by where she lived. Naturally I was introjuced to 'er people, and well, very soon, her and me was engaged."

He repeated "engaged."

"She lived at 'ome with 'er father and mother, quite the lady, in a very nice little 'ouse with a garden—and remarkable respectable people they was. Rich you might call 'em a'most. They owned their own 'ouse—got it out of the Building Society, and cheap because the chap who had it before was a burglar and in prison—and they 'ad a bit of free'old land, and some cottages and money 'nvested—all nice and tight: they was what you'd call snug and warm. I tell you, I was On. Furniture too. Why! They 'ad a pianner. Jane—'er name was Jane—used to play it Sundays, and very nice she played, too. There wasn't 'ardly a 'im toon in the book she couldn't play . . .

"Many's the evenin' we've met and sung 'ims there, me and 'er and the family.

"'Er father was quite a leadin' man in chapel. You should ha' seen him Sundays, interruptin' the minister and givin' out 'ims. He had gold spectacles, I remember, and used to look over 'em at you while he sang hearty—he was always great on singing 'earty to the Lord—and when he got out o' toon 'arf the people went after 'im—always. 'E was that sort of man. And to walk be'ind 'im in 'is nice black clo'es—'is 'at was a brimmer—made one regular proud to be engaged to such a father-in-law. And when the summer came I went down there and stopped a fortnight.

"Now you know there was a sort of 'itch," said Mr. Brisher. "We wanted to marry, me and Jane did, and get things settled. But 'e said I 'ad to get a proper position first. Consequently there was a 'itch. Consequently, when I went down there, I was anxious to show that I was a good useful sort of chap like. Show I could do pretty nearly everything like. See?"

I made a sympathetic noise.

"AND down at the bottom of their garden was a bit of wild part like. So I says to 'im, 'Why don't you 'ave a rockery 'ere?' I says. 'It 'ud look nice.'

"'Too much expense,' he says.

"'Not a penny,' says I. 'I'm a dab at rockeries. Lemme make you one.' You see, I'd 'elped my brother make a rockery in the beer garden be'ind 'is tap, so I knew 'ow to do it to rights. 'Lemme make you one,' I says. 'It's 'olidays, but I'm that sort of chap, I 'ate doing nothing,' I says. 'I'll make you one to rights.' And the long and the short of it was, he said I might.

"And that's 'ow I come on the treasure."

"What treasure?" I asked.

"Why!" said Mr. Brisher, "the treasure I'm telling you about, what's the reason why I never married."

"What!—a treasure—dug up?"

'Yes—buried wealth—treasure trove. Come out of the ground. What I kept on saying—regular treasure——" He looked at me with unusual disrespect.

"It wasn't more than a foot deep, not the top of it," he said. "I'd 'ardly got thirsty like, before I come on the corner."

"Go on," I said. "I didn't understand."

"Why! Directly I 'it the box I knew it was treasure. A sort of instinct told me. Something seemed to shout inside of me: 'Now's your chance—lie low.' It's lucky I knew the laws of treasure trove or I'd 'ave been shoutin' there and then. I daresay you know——"

"Crown bags it," I said, "all but one per cent. Go on. It's a shame. What did you do?"

"Uncovered the top of the box. There wasn't anybody in the garden or about like. Jane was 'elping 'er mother do the 'ouse. I was excited—I tell you. I tried the lock and then gave a whack at the hinges. Open it came. Silver coins—full! Shining. It made me tremble to see 'em. And jest then—I'm blessed if the dustman didn't come round the back of the 'ouse. It pretty nearly gave me 'eart disease to think what a fool I was to 'ave that money showing. And directly after I 'eard the chap next door—'e was 'olidaying, too—I 'eard him watering 'is beans. If only 'e'd looked over the fence!"

"What did you do?"

"Kicked the lid on again and covered it up like a shot, and went on digging about a yard away from it—like mad. And my face, so to speak, was laughing on its own account till I had it hid. I tell you I was regular scared like at my luck. I jest thought that it 'ad to be kep' close and that was all. 'Treasure,' I kep' whisperin' to myself, 'Treasure' and 'undreds of pounds, 'undreds of pounds.' Whispering to myself like, and digging like blazes. It seemed to me the box was regular sticking out and showing, like your legs do under the sheets in bed, and I went and put all the earth I'd got out of my 'ole for the rockery slap on top of it. I was in a sweat. And in the midst of it all out toddles 'er father. He didn't say anything to me, jest stood behind me and stared, but Jane told me afterwards when he went indoors, 'e says, 'That there jackanapes of yours, Jane'—he always called me a jackanapes some'ow—'knows 'ow to put 'is back into it after all.' Seemed quite impressed by it, 'e did."

"How long was the box?' I asked, suddenly.

"'Ow long?" said Mr. Brisher.

"Yes—in length?"

"Oh! 'bout so—by," Mr. Brisher indicated a moderate-sized trunk.

"Full?" said I.

"Full up of silver coins—'arf-crowns, I believe."

"Why!" I cried, "that would mean—hundreds of pounds."

"Thousands," said Mr. Brisher, in a sort of sad calm. "I calc'lated it out."

"But how did they get there?"

"All I know is what I found. What I thought at the time was this. The chap who'd owned the 'ouse before 'er father 'd been a regular slap-up burglar. What you'd call a 'igh-class criminal. Used to drive 'is trap—swell one, too." Mr. Brisher meditated on the difficulties of narration and embarked on a complicated parenthesis. "I don't know if I told you it'd been a burglar's 'ouse before it was my girl's father's, and I knew 'e'd robbed a mail train once, I did know that. It seemed to me——"

"That's very likely," I said. "But what did you do?"

"Sweated," said Mr. Brisher. "Regular run orf me. All that morning," said Mr. Brisher, "I was at it, pretending to make that rockery and wondering what I should do. I'd 'ave told 'er father p'r'aps, only I was doubtful of 'is honesty—I was afraid he might rob me of it like, and give it up to the authorities—and besides, considering I was marrying into the family, I thought it would be nicer like if it came thru me. Put me on a better footing, so to speak. Well, I 'ad three days before me left of my 'olidays, so there wasn't no hurry, so I covered it up and went on digging, and tried to puzzle out 'ow I was to make sure of it. Only I couldn't.

"I thought," said Mr. Brisher, "and I thought. Once I got regular doubtful whether I'd seen it or not, and went down to it and 'ad it uncovered again, just as her ma came out to 'ang up a bit of washin' she'd done. Jumps again! Afterward I was just thinking I'd 'ave another go at it, when Jane comes to tell me dinner was ready. 'You'll want it,' she said, 'seeing the 'ole you're dug.'

"I was in a regular daze all dinner, wondering whether that chap next door wasn't over the fence and filling 'is pockets. But in the afternoon I got easier in my mind—it seemed to me it must 'ave been there long it was pretty sure to stop a bit longer—and I tried to get up a bit of a discussion to dror out the old man and see what 'e thought of treasure trove."

MR. BRISHER paused, and affected amusement at the memory.

"The old man was a scorcher," he said; "a regular scorcher."

"What!" said I; "did he——?"

"It was like this," explained Mr. Brisher, laying a friendly hand on my arm and breathing into my face to calm me. "Just to dror 'im out, I told a story of a chap I said I knew—pretendin', you know—who'd found a sovring in a novercoat 'e'd borrowed. I said 'e stuck to it, but I said I wasn't sure whether that was right or not. And then the old man began. Lor'! 'e did let me 'ave it!" Mr. Brisher affected an insincere amusement. "'E was, well—what do might call a rare 'and in a hargument. Said that he was the sort of friend 'e'd naturally expect me to 'ave. Said 'e'd naturally expect that from the friend of a out-of-work loafer who took up with daughters who didn't belong to 'im. There! I couldn't tell you 'arf 'e said. 'E went on most outrageous. I stood up to 'im about it, just to dror 'im out. 'Wouldn't you stick to a 'arf-sov', not if you found it in the street?' I says. "Certainly not,' 'e says; 'certainly I wouldn't.' 'What! not if you found it as a sort of treasure?' 'Young man,' 'e says, 'there's 'l'er 'thority than mine—Render unto Caesar'—what is it? Yes. Well, he fetched up that A rare 'and at 'itting you over the 'ed with the Bible, was the old man. And so he went on. 'E got to such snacks about me at last I couldn't stand it. I'd promised Jane not to answer 'im back, but it got a bit too thick. I—I give it 'im . . ."

Mr. Brisher, by means of enigmatical facework, tried to make me think he had had the best of that argument, but I knew better.

"I went out in a 'uff at last. But not before I was pretty sure I 'ad to lift that treasure by myself. The only thing that kep' me up was thinking 'ow I'd take it out of 'im when I 'ad the cash . . ."

There was a lengthy pause.

"Now, you'd 'ardly believe it, but all them three days I never 'ad a chance at the blessed treasure, never got out not ven a 'arf-crown. There was always a somethink—always.

"'Stonishing thing it isn't thought of more," said Mr. Brisher. "Finding treasure's no great shakes. It's gettin' it. I don't suppose I slep' a wink any of those nights, thinking where I was to take it, what I was to do with it, 'ow I was to explain it. It made me regular ill. And days I was that dull, it made Jane regular 'uffy. 'You ain't the same chap you was in London,' she says, several times. I tried to lay it on 'er father and 'is snacks, but bless you, she knew better. What must she 'ave but that I'd got another girl on my mind! Said I wasn't true. Well, we had a bit of a row. But I was that set on the treasure, I didn't seem to mind a bit anything she said.

"Well, at last I got a sort of plan. I was always a bit good at planning, thou carrying out isn't so much in my line. I thought it all out and settled on a plan. First, I was going to take all my pockets full of these 'ere 'arf-crowns—see?—cated a moderate-sized trunk.

"Well, I got to that state I couldn't think of getting at the Treasure again in the daytime, so I waited until the night before I had to go, and then, when everything was still, up I gets and slips down to the back door, meaning to get my pockets full. What must I do in the scullery but fall over a pail! Up gets 'er father with a gun—'e was a light sleeper was 'er father, and very suspicious—and

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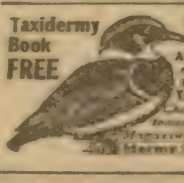
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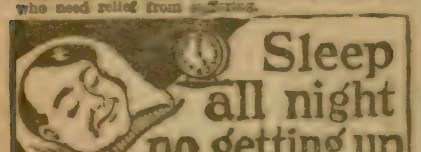

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there was me: 'ad to explain I'd come down to the pump for a drink because my water-bottle was bad. 'E didn't let me off a snack or two over that bit, you lay a bob."

"And you mean to say——" I began.

"Wait a bit," said Mr. Brisher. "I say, I'd made my plan. That put the kybosh on one bit, but it didn't 'urt the general scheme not a bit. I went and I finished that rockery next day, as though there wasn't a snack in the world: cemented over the stones, I did, dabbed it green and everythink. I put a dab of green just to show where the box was. They all came and looked at it, and said 'ow nice it was—even 'e was a bit softer like to see it, and all he said was, "It's a pity you can't always work like that, then you might get something definite to do," he says.

"'Yes,' I says—I couldn't 'elp it—'I put a lot in that rockery,' I says, like that. See? 'I put a lot in that rockery'—meaning——"

"I see," said I—for Mr. Brisher is apt to over-elaborate his jokes.

"E didn't," said Mr. Brisher. "Not then, anyhow.

"Ar'ever—after all that was over, off I set for London. . . . Orf I set for London.

Pause.

"On'y I wasn't going to no London," said Mr. Brisher, with suddend animation, and thrusting his face into mine. "No fear! What do you think?

"I didn't go no further than Colchester—not a yard.

"I'd left the spade just where I could find it. I'd got everything planned and right. I 'ired a little trap in Colchester, and pretended I wanted to go to Ipswich and stop the night, and come back next day, and the chap I 'ired it from made me leave two soverings on it right away, and off I set.

"I didn't go to no Ipswich, neither."

"MIDNIGHT the 'orse and trap was 'itched by the little road that ran by the cottage where 'e lived—not sixty yards off, it wasn't—and I was at it like a good 'un. It was jest the night for such games—overcast—but a trifle too ot, and all round the sky there was summer lightning and presently a thunderstorm. Down it came. First big drops in a sort of fizzle, then 'ail. I kep' on. I whacked at it—I didn't dream the old man would 'ear. I didn't even trouble to go quiet with the spade, and the thunder and lightning and 'ail seemed to excite me like. I shouldn't wonder if I was singing. I got so 'ard at it I clean forgot the thunder and the 'orse and trap. I precious soon got the box showing, and started to lift it——"

"Heavy?" I said.

"I couldn't no more lift it than fly. I was sick. I'd never thought of that! I got regular wild—I tell you, I cursed. I got sort of outageous. I didn't think of dividing it like for the minute, and even then I couldn't 'ave took money about loose in a trap. I hoisted one end sort of wild like, and over the whole show went with a tremenjous noise. Perfeck smash of silver. And then right on the heels of that, Flash! Lightning like the day! and there was the back door open and the old man coming down the garden with 'is blooming old gun. He wasn't not a 'undred yards away!

"I tell you I was that upset—I didn't think what I was doin'. I never stopped—not even to fill my pockets. I went over the fence like a shot, and ran like one o'clock for the trap, cussing and swearing as I went. I was in a state——

"And will you believe me, when I got to the place where I'd left the 'orse and trap, they'd gone. Orf! When I saw that I 'adn't a cuss left for it. I jest danced on the grass, and when I'd danced enough I started off to London. . . . I was done."

Mr. Brisher was pensive for an interval. "I was done," he repeated, very bitterly.

"Well?" I said.

"That's all," said Mr. Brisher.

"You didn't go back?"

"No fear. I'd 'ad enough of that blooming treasure, any'ow for a bit. Besides, I didn't know what was done to chaps who tried to collar a treasure trove. I started off for London there and then——"

"And you never went back?"

"Never."

"But about Jane? Did you write?"

"Three times, fishing like. And no answer. We'd parted in a bit of a 'uff on account of 'er being jealous. So that I couldn't make out for certain what it meant.

"I didn't know what to do. I didn't even know whether the old man knew it was me. I sort of kep' an eye open on papers to see when he'd give up that treasure to the Crown, as I hadn't a doubt 'e would, considering 'ow respectable he'd always been."

"And did he?"

Mr. Brisher pursed his mouth and moved his head slowly from side to side. "Not 'im," he said.

"Jane was a nice girl," he said. "a thoro nice girl mind you, even if jealous, and there's no knowing I mightn't 'ave gone back after a bit. I thought if he didn't give up the treasure I might 'ave a sort of 'old on 'im. . . . Well, one day I looks as usual under Colchester—and there I saw 'is name. What for, d'yer think?"

I could not guess.

Mr. Brisher's voice sank to a whisper, and once more he spoke behind his hand. His manner was suddenly suffused with a positive joy. "Issuing counterfeit coins," he said. "Counterfeit coins!"

"You don't mean to say——"

"Yes—It. Bad. Quite a long case they made of it. But they got 'im, tho he dodged tremenjous. Traced 'is 'aving passed, oh!—nearly a dozen bad 'arf-crowns."

"And you didn't——"

"No fear. And it didn't do 'im much good to say it was treasure trove."

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

Marriage may be a lottery, but it is one of the games of chance that clergymen do not try to discourage.

His Wicked Tongue.

THE man from Edgewater climbed to his favorite bus seat beside his Rogers Park friend and grunted a "Howdy." After exhausting the headlines of the paper, he cleared his throat:

"Di'ja ever notice anythin' funny about my talk?"

"Only in quantity!" replied the Rogers Park friend. "Has Jane been criticising the way you talk?"

"Yep!" snapped the man from Edgewater. "She says Americans are ruining the purity of the English language by slang and agglutination!"

"What the heck is 'agglutination'? Sounds sort o' stuck up!" said the Rogers Park man.

"Stuck together," explained the man from Edgewater. "F'rinstance, if I say to Jane, 'Wh'cha'bin'doin't'day?' she regards me with icy disapproval and repeats with clipped articulation, 'What have you been doing today?'—and by that time I don't give a rip what anybody's doing and subside. After I've eaten until I'm not as hungry as I was I forget and say, 'Gi-me-a-piece-o-cheese.' Janes refuses to pass the cheese until I consider my endings and I end without cheese.

"And she's got it in for slang. She heard a professor say that slang has an ossifying effect on the brain and that Americans ought to be ashamed of their slangy reputation."

"'By their slang ye shall know them'," misquoted the Rogers Park man.

"I'll say so!" agreed the man from Edgewater. "Why, slang is the hub of American speech. If our 'home brew' of jaz lingo isn't three laps ahead of the English 'Fawncy' and 'Don't you know' and 'I say, old boy,' I'll eat my hat. I'll bet dollars to doughnuts that if Jane had her way about cutting out the slang the stock market would go out of business."

"You're some little slang slinger yourself," grinned the Rogers Park man. "No wonder Jane thinks it is time to reform you. I wonder how you'd sound with your slang cut out!"

"About as snappy as a centenarians' picnic!" disgustedly replied the man from Edgewater. "Why, slang is the spice of conversation. It takes a wise guy to keep up with the flow of gas generated by the young squirts in this day and age, but America has 'em all going. No wonder we can't join a league of nations that talks in a dead language!"

"You certainly shake a wicked tongue," sighed the friend from Rogers Park. 'You could convince Jane of most anything, even of the value of agglutinated slang!"

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

Individualism.

"I UNDERSTAND you called on the citizens of Crimson Gulch to disarm."

"Yes," replied Cactus Joe. "The idea met with great applause."

"Has anybody disarmed?"

"Not yet. While us populace agreed collectively that it was a great scheme, individually every one of the boys said he'd like to see anybody who was man enough to take his gun away from him."

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

BIG SERVICE FOR 10c

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 14.—In order to let people, all over the country, see for themselves how valuable the Pathfinder can be to them, the editor of that old-established national weekly offers to send his paper on trial 8 weeks for only 10 cents. The 10c does not begin to pay the cost but the editor says he is glad to invest in new friends. The Pathfinder has been going for 28 years. One family in every 70 in the entire United States now takes it. Thousands more would take it if they realized what they are missing. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Only a dime sent to the Pathfinder, 82 Langdon Station, Washington, D. C., will keep your whole family informed, entertained, helped and inspired.—Advertisement.

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

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⁂ ⁂ ⁂

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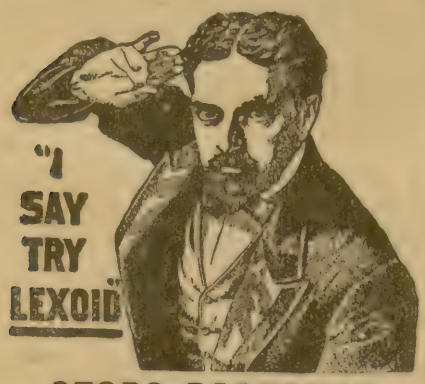

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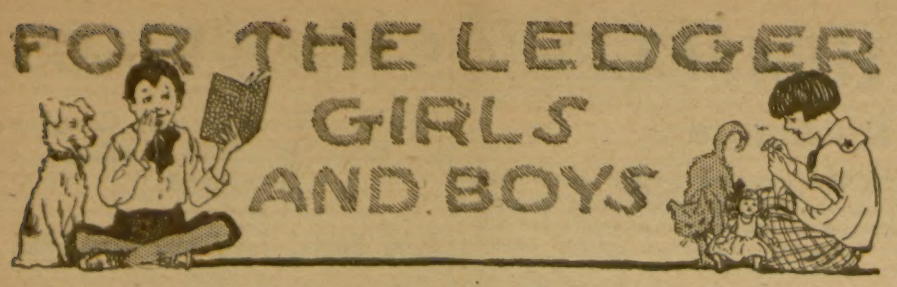

The Patience Kite

"IF I want to do a thing—well, I guess I'm going to do it," announced Georgie Brown to his sister Grace.

"But suppose you can't do it," broke in Grace, "suppose things interfere and you just can't go against them."

"Aw, nothing's goin' to interfere if you want to do a thing badly enough," replied Georgie.

And with that he sauntered off to the playhouse, and Grace was left to think over alone what he had said. Georgie seemed a hero in her eyes and she never doubted his power. It seemed that he could always do a thing if he had a mind to do it.

With puzzled brow Grace walked slowly towards the house. On the front porch her mother was busily sewing on a dainty white dress for her. She dropped into the soft cushions of the swing and turning to her mother asked her advice.

"Mother, can people always do what they want if they want to hard enough?" was her question.

Looking up from her sewing, Mrs. Brown replied, "Sometimes they can and sometimes they can't. Why, dear?"

"Well," Grace answered, "I told Georgie that I didn't think he was right when he said that nothing would interfere if a person wanted to do anything hard enough. Sometimes I try ever so hard and work like sixty to make things come as I want them, I'm as patient as anybody could be, and yet I don't always do what I set out to do. How is that?"

Mrs. Brown pondered a moment.

"We must all learn that things do not always come as we wish them, even tho we try hard to make them come," she said. "Sometimes we have to wait. Sometimes obstacles get in the way, and if they cannot be removed we must be patient and let things take their course.

"Patience is something that I believe Georgie never heard of," put in Grace.

"Well, then he must learn of it," said mother. "What can we do to make him see that he can get what he wants if he will want it hard enough to wait for it if it doesn't come right away?"

It was a calm, sunny day. A little breeze was blowing and the leaves on the trees were fluttering. Suddenly there crossed before them, high in the sky over the top of their neighbors' houses, a gay kite, with a long tail trailing gracefully after it.

"See the kite," cried Grace. "Doesn't it sail along beautifully."

Mrs. Brown watched it with great interest. Then slowly a smile of satisfaction spread over her face.

"I have it," she exclaimed. "I believe it will work and Georgie will not fail to realize that success depends on many things besides determination, commendable tho that is.

"Let's encourage him to make a kite, and when he tries to fly it, he will find that much depends on the wind and that one cannot make the wind do what he wishes. He will have to wait for just the right kind of weather to make his kite fly to his satisfaction. Don't you think this a good plan, dear?"

"Yes, indeed I do," cried Grace with pleasure. "Let's call him in now." And to the window she tripped to call to Georgie, eager to get the plan started on the way to fulfillment.

George came running in. He was tired and hot and wanted to fret and be petted. His mother asked him what was the matter with him, and he answered that he didn't know what to do with himself.

"Then I know just the thing for you," said Mrs. Brown. "I have an idea for you and Grace. I think it would be fine for you to make a kite and fly it. There are some slender sticks and some tissue paper in the attic you may use."

"Gee," shouted Georgie, "that is a fine idea. Come! Let's get to work on it now, Grace."

And so the two of them raced to the attic and started to work. By dinner time they had it all ready and they went to bed that night in fine spirits ready to fly it the next day.

But things were not to go forward as they hoped. Mrs. Brown read the weather report in the newspapers and chuckled to herself when she saw that showers were promised for the next day.

"Ah," she mused to herself, "I think my Georgie will have a disappointment. We'll see if he learns a lesson."

The next day, true to the weather report, was rainy. It was dark, and when Georgie got up in the morning he went to the window and gazed out. His face fell and he rushed to call Grace.

"It's raining," he said, "we cannot fly the kite today, can we?"

"Guess not," said Grace.

It rained all day. It rained the next day, and it rained the next day.

Once Grace said to Georgie, "You cannot fly the kite no matter how hard you want to when the weather is against you, can you?"

He growled, "No, I guess not."

The next day the sun came out and Georgie was smiling with glee, and he and Grace took the kite carefully out and attempted the great flight. Georgie ran up and down the garden with the kite trying to get it started. It flew behind him, but it didn't rise above the level of his head.

"What's the matter with it?" Georgie cried in dismay.

"Let's go in and ask mother," suggested Grace.

They went indoors and told their troubles to their mother.

"Why, I suppose the answer is that there is no breeze today to carry it up," said Mrs. Brown. "You'll have to wait for the right wind."

"Gee, it looks as tho we'll never fly that old kite," said Georgie.

"Oh, I thought you said one could do anything if one wanted to hard enough," piped up Grace.

"Well, it seems that you can't do it if the weather is against you," said Georgie haltingly.

"Yes," said Mrs. Brown, "and many other things, too. I hope you have learned that patience is necessary in all things and that sometimes patience is worth more than strong desires for a thing. Wait awhile patiently and a good day will come for the kite flying."

"All right," said Georgie, somewhat subdued.

The next day was beautiful and a slight breeze was stirring. Georgie and Grace took the kite to a nearby field and attempted another flight. They ran with the kite on its string and after a few attempts it began to soar. Slowly, it rose and Georgie gave it more string. Soon it was above the housetop and then it went higher and higher. Georgie let it out the full length of the string. The breeze carried the kite along and then Grace said, "Let go."

But Georgie said no.

"I want to keep this kite," he replied. "We'll sail it lots more. This is my patience kite and I want to keep it to remember."

One Way.

"MUMMY, I'm goin' to give Auntie Maud my spade and pail."

"Whatever for, Willie?"

"So that she can kick it."

"Kick it."

"Yes. Daddy said we should have a lot of money if only auntie would kick the bucket."

Revised History.

"WHY did Washington cross the Delaware?"

"Please, teacher, he wanted to go to Atlantic City."

The Boatman.

THE boatman at the ferry said:: "I will take you across for twenty-five cents apiece." "Will you take two more and make it twenty cents each?" asked the prospective passenger. The boatman considered. "Yes," he said, "I shall make ten cents more if I do."

How many passengers were taken altogether?

Answer: The boatman got forty cents from the two extra passengers, but as his total profit was only ten cents more by having two extra passengers, the reduction of five cents each to the other passengers must have come to thirty cents, so that there must have been six passengers in the original number, or eight altogether.

Her Viewpoint.

"IF I were rich you'd marry me quick enough!"

"Thank you, Freddie! That's the nicest thing you ever said to me, and it is so unusual."

"Why—er, what——"

"You, and a lot of others, have paid compliments to my beauty, but that is the first time any young man has ever given me credit for common sense."

Tommy Knew.

"WELL, Tommy, did you learn anything at school today?" asked the proud father.

"Yes, dad," replied the youngster with pugilistic ambitions.

"Fine! What was it? History, geography, grammar——?"

"No, dad. I learned that Sam Snoggs, the butcher's son, packs an awful punch in his right."

A Benefactor.

A GUEST who was doing full justice to the excellent dinner provided by his host was being watched with great interest by the little daughter of the house. At length she said, "Oh, I do wish you were here to dinner every day." The guest beamed with satisfaction. "Do you, my dear. Why?" he inquired. "Because there won't be anything cold to eat tomorrow!"

Kindred Souls.

"MAMA, this paper says that cattle when with other cattle eat more and fatten better than when kept alone."

"Yes, my child. I guess that is right."

"Well, mama, we must be like cattle."

"Why, what do you mean, child?"

"We always have more to eat and eat more when we have company."

Particular.

BOY (answering ad)—Are you a baseball fan?

Employer—Why do you ask such an impertinent question?

Boy—Well, I want a boss who can listen to reason when one of my numerous grandmothers die.

$345.00

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MEISTER PIANO

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30 DAYS FREE TRIAL—ALL FREIGHT PREPAID

If you like the piano we will sell it to you on small monthly payments to suit your convenience as low as $3 per month. No cash deposit asked. No interest on payments. No extras of any kind. Stool free with piano. Write today for our catalog, illustrated in the natural colors of the wood. It's free. If you are interested in player-pianos send for free catalog. We have a fine selection. Rothschild & Co., Dept. 108, Chicago

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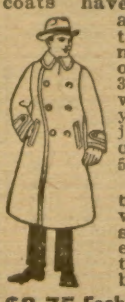
All wool Government overcoats, slightly worn, but in first class condition. These coats have been renovated, cleaned and pressed and a first class tailor would ask $75.00 to make one from the same class of material. Men's sizes from 36 and up. The small sizes will make the warmest coat your boy ever wore and are just the thing for school. Any of these coats should wear for 5 years. Our price $8.75.



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ADDILINE, - 195 Arcade Building, - Columbus, Ohio

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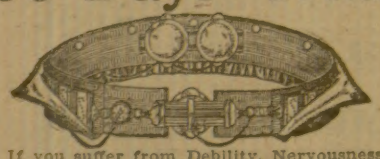

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500 North Dearborn St., CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

FINDING HIMSELF

By Cecille Rushmore

[Copyright.]

"I AM not the girl for you, and I shall not spoil your life by trying to make myself believe that I am," spoke Huldah Brill.

"But maybe you love—like me a little, Huldah?" flustered honest Bryan Wylie anxiously.

He was so dead in earnest that a sharp pang struck the heart of the girl. At that moment, had he pressed his suit, so appealing and eloquent was his manner and expression, he would have won. Resolutely, however, she turned from the temptation.

Hers had been a hard, practical experience. Young as she was, Huldah had seen only the seamy side of life. Her uncle and aunt, with whom she lived, had led a sordid, loveless existence. Their system, the atmosphere about them, had stifled and chilled the ingenious instincts latent in the nature of their adopted charge.

So, when Bryan Wylie continued to show her attentions, and, in his well-meaning and blundering way, spoke of an engagement, Huldah closed her heart stubbornly to sentiment. She felt that her experience had made her not like other girls. She recognized fidelity and sterling worth in this sincere suitor just on the threshold of a business career. If he made no progress she would be a burden. If he scored a success, there were brighter, prettier girls who would fitly adorn the social circle in which he would move.

"Then—then," submitted Bryan, after a pause, "what am I to do?"

Huldah tried to laugh lightly, but it was a hollow mockery. There were actual tears in her eyes. It was with extreme difficulty that she composed and commanded her turbulent mind.

"Bryan," she said, seriously at last, "I am so much older than you in worldly wisdom, I will give you advice like a sage."

"It isn't advice I want," murmured the young man apathetically—"it's love, your love, no one's else. If I can't have that, of course, I cannot stay here. It would be too trying."

"Yes, Bryan," advised Huldah deliberately, "go away and find yourself."

"Am I lost, then?" propounded Bryan, with a ghost of a smile.

"I think you are," asserted Huldah. "You have surrendered to your environment too readily. You have looked no farther than this dead, dull community. You have taken the first business position presented. You are ready to tie yourself for life to the first girl who takes your fancy. Don't you see you are not doing justice to yourself? You are worthy of the right kind of a wife."

"You are my only kind!" vehemently declared Bryan.

But Huldah was obdurate. With all her hard, practical sense, if she had stopped to analyze the situation, she would have realized that she was perpetrating a mutual injustice—she would have recognized that it was actual love for Bryan that caused her to distrust her own ability to make him happy, and, therefore, ordinary rules did not apply.

So Bryan Wylie went away disconsolate, and Huldah returned to a daily dreary grind of her monotonous life, thinking only of duty. Within a year both her uncle and aunt died. Their estate was trivial. When it was all over, the family lawyer handed Huldah a few hundred dollars, and she went to the city.

Huldah found a cheap but pleasant room in the home of a poor widow lady, and marked out a prospective business career. Her idea was to find office work. She wrote a fair hand, was bright and intelligent, could pick up stenography and in time graduate into a good-class office assistant. She was doomed to disappointment at first, however. Her lack of knowledge of typewriting stood in her way. She sought employment in less pretentious fields.

One day she was passing a five-and-ten-cent store, when she noticed in its window a sign: "Lady Assistant Wanted." The store was one door removed from a main thoroughfare, and did not present any charm of locality or attractiveness as to the window display. However, Huldah entered the place, wearied with seeking a position and glad to take anything that would introduce her into city business ways.

A man, apparently the proprietor of the place, stood behind a counter figuring over some bills. He did not appear to be in love with his business, judging from the indifferent expression on his face. He looked up.

He Did Not Appear to Be in Love With His Business.

"What is it, miss?" he asked, and then, explosively: "Oh, Huldah!"

She would have retreated, but it was too late. The storekeeper was Bryan Wylie, and he came out animatedly to greet her. Her quick eye told her that he was a disappointed man and she lingered. He told her so himself, after she had consented to sit down and chat over old times.

Her dreary tale was soon recited. That of Bryan was quite as depressing. He had come to the city, had found work and saved some money. A chance on a side street, had offered to invest in the present store. He had done so, to his cost.

"No trade, no capital. I've made a bad mess of it all," he admitted bitterly. "I'm going to try and sell out and go back to a salary. Huldah, it gives me new life to meet an old friend like you!"

"If I could help you out, I would be glad, Bryan," spoke Huldah frankly.

He jumped at the suggestion. He could pay $12 a week.

"Remember," she said, "you and I are to forget everything but business."

"You may. I can't!" he answered her frankly. "I shall always love you, but no word of it shall pass my lips to offend you."

Huldah entered upon her duties. She was at the store at 8 in the morning and left at 6 in the afternoon. Bryan got a chance to work temporarily as a traveling salesman in the suburbs. Huldah advised him to accept the position, and let her see what she could make out of the little store.

"Why, Huldah!" he exclaimed, as he returned from his first trip; "what does this mean?"

For, marvelously, magically, the space had been doubled and took in two entrances one on the main street.

"I had a chance to get a lease of the store back of this and risked it," explained Huldah. "The people you buy from were willing to double the stock on long terms of payment, and we are keeping three clerks, and last week we made $100 clear!"

"We? You!" cried the delighted Bryan. "Oh, Huldah! I am a sad failure, and you are a wonderful success in business. Huldah, you told me once to go to the city and 'find myself.' I couldn't outside of the ordinary humdrum worker; but you, Huldah—you have found me, indeed!"

The store thrived, and when Bryan returned to the city after his trips it was like some joyous home-coming. One day he said to Huldah:

"I spoke about your finding me. Please don't let me get lost again!" and that broke the ice toward further discussion. Huldah forgot the restriction concerning the subject of love, for she was convinced at last that Bryan needed her and would never tire of her dear presence.

* * *

Mean.

"MA, TEACHER'S awful mean."

"Hush, my son, you mustn't say that."

"Well, she is! What do you think? She borrowed my knife to sharpen a pencil to give me a bad mark."

* * *

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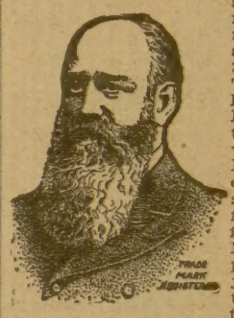

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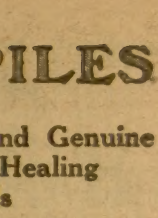

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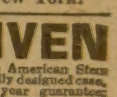

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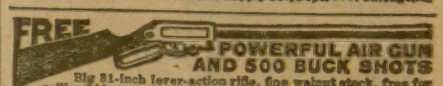

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12 Oatmeal Dishes	6¾ "	1 Sauce Boat	
12 Bread and Butter Plates	6¼ "	1 Sauce Boat Stand	
12 Fruit or Dessert Dishes	5¼ "	1 Pint Bowl	
12 Cups		1 Covered Sugar Bowl	(2 pieces)
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